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They said, ...



"Wow! Thundercats is brilliant. The graphics can't be faulted: The screen is extremely colourful and the animation topnotch. Great stuff, I bet the T.V. series aint as good as the game."

Rating: Crash Smash 91% - Crash.



"The game grabs you from the moment you load if up, Brilliant graphics and superb action make Thundercats a real winner."

C. & V. G.

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"If it's playabilit, Buggy Boy has 🐗 more. Everythi screen. The graph



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have got for Christmas'

"If you'll just load it up, we think you'll agree that in Buggy Boy Elite have definitely done the business."

Commodore User.

"It's rare that a computer game manages to give a real feeling of thrill and exh

feeling of thrill and exhilaration, but Buggy Boy manages it! The

graphics are absolutely superb - I've never seen such a smooth realistic 3D effect, and the 'feel' of the control

method is tremendous." ZZAP-64.

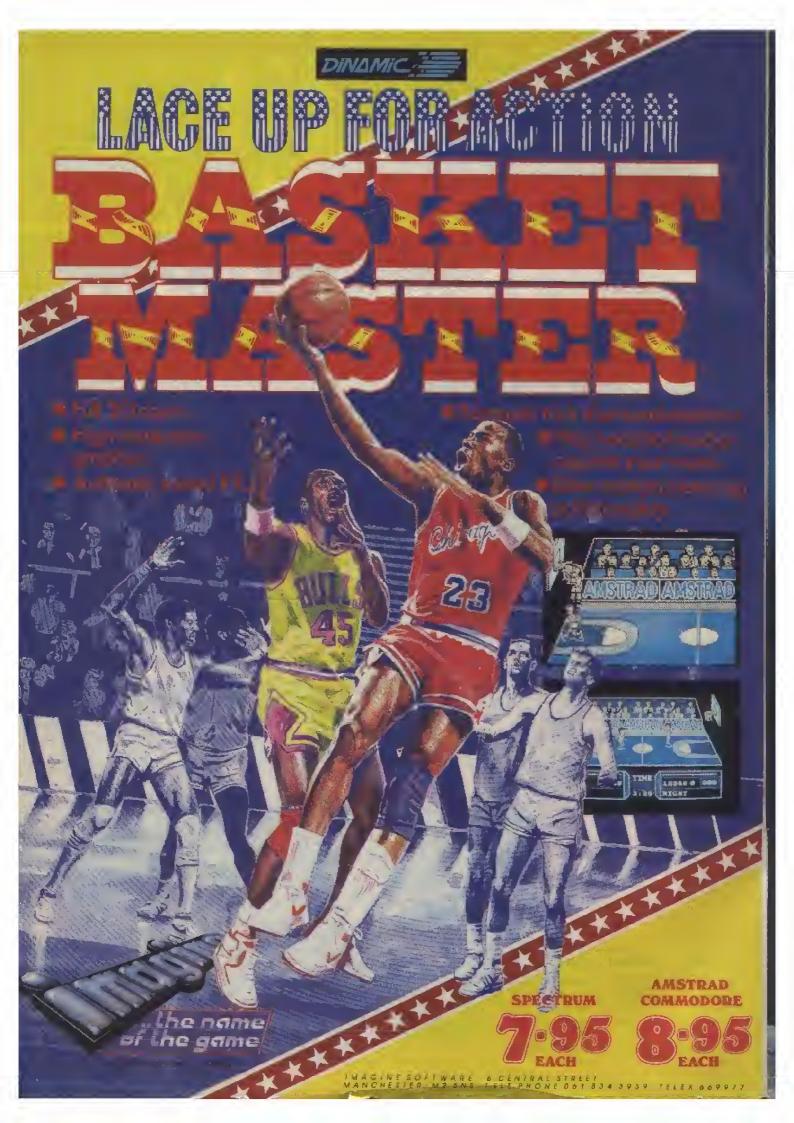
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COVER BY Oliver Frey



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There was a Soviet apparatchik. Chinese People's a Chinese People's Revolutionary revolutionary revolutionary person and a Spectrum-owner on this plane together, right? And the airline had been publishing all these self-congratulatory ads about adding seven new destinations to its schedules in the last year, in Sunday supplements, business, magazines, The Independent, you know the sort of thing.

of thing.
So the Russian laughs and drains another vodka and says: 'That's nothing, friends. Call that growth? In Mother Russia, we have a three-vear scheme for we have a three-year scheme for improved industrial efficiency that will increase tractor production by 72%!' The Chinese butts in: 'Sorry,

Lloydovavich, you're Lloyd Lloydovovich, you're talking through your cossack. In Peking we're already halfway through our latest seven-year plan – not to mention a Cultural Revolution and a Great Leap Forward. He sits back, smugly, and invites the capitalist homecomputing running dog to beat that for long-range social ptenning.
The Spectrum-owner, who's

been dozing over some minor magazine with 'Sinclair' in the title, has to pause to think. Lloyd Lloydovovich calls for

another vocks and, while the Spectrum-owner's still puzzling over the question, makes some silly joke about his ROM needing a bit of perestroika. The Chinese gent's given up on the whole

gent's given up on the whole conversation now and starts reeducating himself out of some little red book.
Suddenly the Spectrumowner speaks, in a slow but confident sort of way. 'Well, chaps,' he says, 'I'm afraid my country doesn't have any plans in particular. But there is one objective we all work toward.'

objective we all work toward.'
"Exactly! Economic imperialism!" snorts the Chinese traveller, hardly looking up from his book.

"Well, actually, no," says the Spectrum-owner almost apologetically, 'All it is is that we're all jolly certain to buy the next issue of CRASH as soon as it's in the newsagents on January 28.' Lloyd Lloydovovich defected.

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CHRISTMAS GREETINGS

IT'S a quarter to three and there's no-one in the place but you and me—and half a dozen assorted pagedesigners, film-planners, production controllers and ticking clocks hurrying the last dregs of CRASH (what? me a dreg?) on its way. These 196 pages were thrown together in just a fortnight, at three times the rate of ordinary CRASHes, so we'll be as interested to read what we've written as you.

I could go on about the blood, the sweat, the tears, the Pro-Plus, but that's the job of the CRASH History; and anyway, a Christmas editorial is customarily the place for Christmas greetings.

for Christmas greetings.
There's not a whole lot you can actually do with Christmas greetings, except say

Christmas Greetings



and hope for the best, or be pretentious and buy a card covered with 'merry Christmas' in 42 languages, 32 of which nobody ever recognises ('Hebrew . . . 'I'm still putting my money on

So, Christmas greetings - I won't spell it out again, but you can glance a few inches up if you must have it in a mock-ancient script.

OTHER BUSINESS

This issue Dave Hawkes of Ludlow joins the reviewing team. He's a school - sorry, college -Dunn, and Bym Wellhy.

But sadiy Derek Brewster is leaving CRASH after 45 issues as our guide on the Adventure Trail. The veteran programmer is helping set up a software house

and just won't have the time to write for a while

Adventure Trail (page 55 this month) will continue, of course, with all its regular features. We may be ringing Derck with a few Signstumps

Till next month, then, Christian dirritings (as the saying goe

BARNABY PAGE

THE SUPERCLONE

A piece of sensational information that arrived just a little late to get on the cover is the news that a major hardware-development company has been working on a

128K Spectrum supercione Simon N Goodwin unearthed the full story and has exclusive details starting on page 143 - more next ISSUA.

APOLOGIES ALL ROUND AGAIN

OUR TURN and theirs. Firebird has apologised as profusely as a subsidiary of British Telecom can for a picture mix-up in last issue's previews. The picture sent out to magazines labelled as Enlightenment - Druid II was in fact Gothik, another forthcoming Firebird release,

Putting an Amstrad screenshot of Ocean's Freddy Hardest in the reviews was our mistake, though,

IN THE NEXT



MORE OF

More reviews, more Playing Tips, more previews, more On The Screen . . . what more could a Spectrum ask for?

HERE'S WHAT, AND IT'S ALL IN THE NEXT CRASH ...

THE CRASH DIRECTORY PART TWO – all the POKEs, playing tips, maps, features, and utility and hardware reviews ever in ORASH FANZINE FILE

RUN IT AGAIN - football-management games SCORES - more high scores SOFTWARE CLUBS - joining up

EEE IN COMPS - the easy, the tough and the silly

It's all in CRASH Issue 49, on sale Thursday January 28

MEM

CRASH presents Christmas

SMASHED!

COMBAT SCHOOL Ocean puts you through the stress and strain, wind and rain.

MATCH DAY II Back on the pitch

HOT SHOTS 70% and over . . .

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Zynaps' programmer Dominic Robinson's puzzling latest dame

JACK THE RIPPER

... in poke-a-gut papers

MASK II

Comic-strip licence produces another good game! Shock!

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SIDEWALK

Producer: Infogrames Retail price: £9.95

he's going to kiff you ...
there you are, on the other side of town, your motorbike's been stolen, you have only till 7.30 to get your girlfriend to a concert for which you don't even have the tickets yet. It never rains but it nours rains but it pours.

So find the parts of your bike, pick up your girlfriend, get the tickets and everything is sure to be

icons.)

These streets are full of dropouts and thugs. You can ask the dropouts if they know where your bike is, or how to get tickets to the concert, but meeting a thug will almost certainly result in a

In a fight you can punch, kick and head-butt. The pint of beer to the right side of the upper screen, which represents your energy, is matched by another pint pot displaying your opponent's



'Fantastically detailed' graphics in a rare Spectrum release from French house infogrames



Sidewalk: trying to get on yer bike

hunky-dory – but fate throws plenty of pavement problems at you in Sidewalk, a rare Spectrum release from French software house Intogrames.

Progress through the town is shown on a horizontally-split screen. (The upper half shows the mean streets through which you walk and the shops you can go in; the lower half is given over to

NICK

"Sidewalk is an excellent cartoon adventure-type game. The characters, backgrounds and objects are all excellently defined, and the detail is amazing! On the 128K machine you get the added luxury of almost nonstop groovy music. The idea is relatively simple, but presented this way and with these brill graphics, Sidewalk will go far. "

ROBIN

"Sidewalk makes a pleasant change from shoot-'em-ups and complex adventures. The monochromatic graphics are very well drawn, almost carteon-like, and the sound is some of the best on the 48K Spectrum for a long time. It doesn't take long to learn how to deal with the thugs; the real enjoyment of Sidewalk is derived from actually trying to recover the bits of the motorbike by visiting buildings and interacting with other characters. There's enough depth and puzzles to keep you coming back for more, and with the clock clicking away you have to be quick on your toes."

strength. Both are drained by fighting, and refilling can only be done at a bar.

If you win a fight with a thug, any bike part that he's carrying is transferred to you—along with any

money you can grab from him.

A clock ticks away, increasing the tension. Fail to complete your tasks, and your bike's gone for good, you won't get to the concert and your girl probably won't accept your excuses.



PAUL

" Sidewalk has some of the best graphics of the year, and the atmosphere created by them is so strong it's difficult to leave. And all the characters come over very realistically. The aim of the game is simple but extremely effective - much time is spent running around in a panic to avoid that final blow which will finish you off. And when you do die you've just got to have that one more go! Sidewalk is an exciting change from the usual game.

COMMENTS

Joysticks: Kempston, Sinclair Graphics: fantastically detailed monochromatic play area and stunning 3-D effect Sound: excellent on 48K as well as 128K – jolly little title tunes with simple in-game spot

General rating: simple, but original, lun and very addictive

Presentation Graphics **Playability** Addictive qualities
OVERALL 87%



ASK II

Producer: Gremlin Graphics Retail price: £7.99

ome nasties won't accept a 'game over' when they see it -- VENOM, the association of evil people, is on the march again just months after its defeat in Gremlin Graphics's monochromatic key-collecting game MASK (61% Overall in Issue 45). And so the agents of MASK are back in action (and in colour) too, saving the world in Gremlin's sec and Ilcence based on the TV series and Kenner Parker toys.

Matt Trakker and his colleagues are faced with three missions. Firstly, the President of the Peaceful Nations Alliance has been kidnapped and without him a vital treaty cannot be concluded. He must be rescued and taken to a helipad whence he can fly to the summit

Secondly, VENOM has nearly completed building a base in the Middle East. And as you've guessed, they're out to control oitfields. The base can be destroyed, but only if a missile within it is located and detonated by the MASK team.

And thirdly, a large ruby wor-

" This is an amazing change from MASKI. The whole con-cept is much more attractive cept is much more attractive and playable – with the graphics being the most impressive feature. However, though the action is fast and involving, I never felt in full control of what was going on; the collision-detection is very suspect, too, and tacks consistency. Still, it's much more interesting and better-looking than MASKI, and a much stronger tie-in." much stronger tie-in.

shipped by jungle monks has been purlained by VENOM and incorpo-rated into a laser weapon. The gem

PAUL

destroyed. To combat VENOM, you start off by selecting your team members and vehicles. The right choice of vehicles is essential, though fortu-nately you can get different ones as the game progresses and con-

must be returned and the laser

MASK II: colourful graphics and varied gameplay

ditions change.
There are five MASK vehicles: the Thunder Hawk (sports car/jet), the Rhino (an armed battering ram), the Rhino ATV (an ati-terrain vehicle), the Condor (a motorbike-cum-helicopter) and the Gator (an off-road vehicle that converts into

a hydroplane),
All MASK vehicles are heavily
armed, because VENOM might
attack in land-based craft, submannes or helicopters. If a MASK

vehicle is damaged, it can acquire extra armour - provided the damage isn't too severe. Otherwise it has to be abandoned.

Detaleuto

Running out of fuel is another hazard, and the Thunder Hawk

uses rather a lot.
It's bound to be a dangerous and exciting day for MASK. And no doubt at the end there'll be another licence.

COMMENTS

Joysticks: Cursor, Kempston,

Graphics: very colourful with

detailed sprites Sound: few sound effects and

General rating: a playable and attractive tie-in, much more lively and fun than MASK I (which wasn't too bad itself)

Graphics Playability Addictive qualities OVERALL

819

NICK

"The differences between this and the last MASK game are incredible. MASK I was just another boring scrolling-background game, but here the graphics have been excellently-drawn and colour has been used to great effect. Each mission is as exciting as the previous, because the objectives are so different, and MASK II is a top-class game."

ERIK: PHANTOM OF THE OPERA

Producer: Crysys

Retail price: £7.95 cassette, £9.95 disk

Authors: Mark Rivers

irst it was a novel. Then Frenchman Gaston Leroux's tale The Phantom Of The Opera became a classic silent film with Lon Chaney as the disfigured vil-

BYM

"Controlling Raoul is very awkward; you can't jump and shoot at the same time, which makes the nasties vir-tually indestructible, and their flight pattern makes it even more difficult to open fire on them. So Erik: Phantom Of The Opera is a very aggravating game. It just seems impossible to get through it.

Erik: Phantom Of The Opera:horsibly disfigured

lain skulking in the shadows of Paris's great opera house. More films and an Andrew Lloyd Webber West End musical followed - and now Software Publishing Associates is launching its label Crysys with the arcade adventure Erik: Phantom Of The Opera. (The company's best-known for its recently-launched budget label Pirate.)

Erik, once a pretty boy, has been horribly disfigured by a terrible fire. Using this as an excuse he seeks revenge on those he believes are responsible and becomes the eponymous Erik, Phantom Of The Opera.

He abducts Christine, the leading lady of the opera, and hides her in a labyrinth of tunnels and stairways beneath the opera house. But raunchy Raoul, the singer's paramour, is hot on the

ROBIN

"The primitive graphics of Erik: Phantom of The Opera are quite off-putting, and the sound is sporadic and annoying. Playing the game isn't easy, though with practice controlling Rapul becomes second nature, and there's not much to draw the there's not much to draw the player into the action, it soon becomes boring. "

trail and sets out to track her down.

Erik has set loose some rather nasty things to get Raoul. Skulls bounce down on him, spirits fleat towards him, and opera masks scamper down stairs. By welltimed leaping, ducking and run-ning, Raoul can avoid them. But it's far better to blast the bothersome things to bits, earning points and preserving energy for the next

night's show. Skulls and spirits might be frightening enough, but Raoul also has to contend with locked doors and find six keys before he can even get within singing distance of his loved one.

NICK !

"There's no Michael Craw-ford or Sarah Brightman from the stage musical to cheer this up a bit, just a few badsprites on a monotonous background. Raoul is repres-ented as a sort of stick man ented as a sort of stick man with long legs and a finger that seems to shoot bullets! And the interpolation of the seems to see a multi-colour, multi-directional scrolling arcade game", but the colour is in massive monochrome blocks and I certainly wouldn't waste my money on this in en arcade, " this in en arcade.

COMMENTS

Joysticks: Cursor, Kempston,

Graphics: monochrome blocks, despite the inlay's

causes
Sound: spot effects
General rating: unattractive
and unrewardingly difficult

Presentation Graphics Playsbility Addictive qualities

54%

HOW QUICK CAN YOU GET AT YOUR SAVINGS WITH A BARCLAYPLUS CARD?



IMPLOSION

Producer: Cascade Games Retail price: £8.95 Authors: Paul Laidlaw

white dwarf -- a dying star -- has been plucked from its position in space by an unknown force and propelled towards Earth on a collision course. Panic grows. This renegade star must be stopped. You are the pilot and air warrior charged with that task.

Something or someone has set up a series of eight defence grids around the white dwarf. To destroy the approaching colossus these must be stripped away

You have a space fighter which can rotate, accelerate and decelerate, dive and climb. More

importantly, it's equipped with a forward-firing double cannon.

Pure energy spheres drift in and out of the protective gridwork that surrounds the star. Cannon fire will make these spheres explode, and you can collect some energy crystals from the exploding apheres. Then you have a fresh source of energy for your shields

You can also pass inside the grid, but it's very risky.

When all of the white dwarf's protective layers have been stripped away, the trench that leads to the centre of the star is revealed. You can now get to the core, where the final part of the mission has to be completed.

CRITICISM

" Implosion can best be categorised as a simple shoot-'em-up. The playing area where all the animation takes place is monochromatic, which safely avoids any masking or attribute problems, and visually the game is unimpressive. Sound is tacking, too. The controls are simple to use, which makes it quite playable, especially as there are no complex instructions to absorb; unfortunately there's not much else to absorb the player in Implosion either.

 "Implesion is one of the most dull and uninteresting games I've

The cockpit has all mod cons; radar, compass and pitch-and-roll

Indicators and an altimeter are all

Your fighter is highly manoeuvrable and can bank left or right, dive and climb. Engine power (shown

on a thrust indicator) can be fine-

power

available

engaged,

tuned, and when three quarters of

dramatically increasing thrust and fuel-consumption.

fighter airborne, because if you slow down too much the aircraft

Speed is crucial to keeping the

Altitude has to be monitored,

afterburners kick

have been

39%



Implosion: simple, too simple.

played for ages. The graphics are monochromatic and very boring; you can weave through the grid for ever and ever but there's very little variation.

 "Implosion holds nothing special, Just flying about killing the odd alien life form isn't much fun; I've had more fun playing Space invaders than playing this. There's one neat part where you can weave in and out of the grid, but that's about it. '

COMMENTS

Joysticks: Cursor, Kempston,

Graphics: monochromatic and unimaginative

Sound: not worth mentioning Options: definable keys General rating: plain and boring

Presentation	50%
Graphics	43%
Playability	37%
Addictive qualities	32%
OVERALL	38%
Addictive qualities DVERALL	

ACE 2

Producer: Cascade Games

Retail price: £8.95 46K cassette, £9.95 128K cassette

ne of your spy ships has moved into position off enemy territory - so it's no great surprise when they send out a combat fighter to destroy the spy ship

You must detect the aircraft before it reaches the spy ship. When you come face to face there may be no more than a doglight, or it could be a full-scale groundand-aerial conflict.

You take off in a fighter from an aircraft carrier at your home base.

BYM

"Yet more flight simulations. this one has more novelty, with face-to-face combat, but it's spoiled by the cramped, split screens, which don't leave much room for intricate graphics. Nevertheless, once you're engrossed in flying around the barren wastes the tactical part of the game gets progressively more addictive." tive.

NICK

"I like a good flight simula-tion now and then, but there's no gameplay in Ace 2. The graphics are OK and the presentation excellent, with a good loading screen and a good loading screen and free excellent packaging, but Ace is a cheap follow-up to a great original.

too; there is a ceiling of 60,000 feet above which your aircraft cannot

On encountering the enemy, you have a range of weaponry available. Your Ace fighter carries aerial cannon, heat-seeking and radar-directed missiles, air-toground and air-to-ship missiles. different quite capabilities.

Still, what the enemy can do is equally drastic. When the enemy fires its cannon you can only take

evasive action, and you might end up scurrying back to the aircraft carrier for repairs. Cascade's original Ace flight simulation earned 81% Overall in

CRASH Issue 32.

DAVE

"This is the perfect flight simulation, allowing the air-craft enormous manoeuvrability. In many respects Ace 2 looks like Ocean's Top Gun, but it's in a higher class. However, the colour is sparse, as is the the sound, and the playing area is rather small – though it still permits the two-player option.

COMMENTS

Joysticke: Kempston, Sinclair Graphics: split-screen display with unrealistic representation of movement

Sound: very simple spot effects

Options: two-player option General rating: a poor imita-tion of Ocean's *Top Gun*

Presentation 789 Graphics 509 Playability 619 Addictive qualities OVERALL 62%

Ace 2: a lacklustre flight sim





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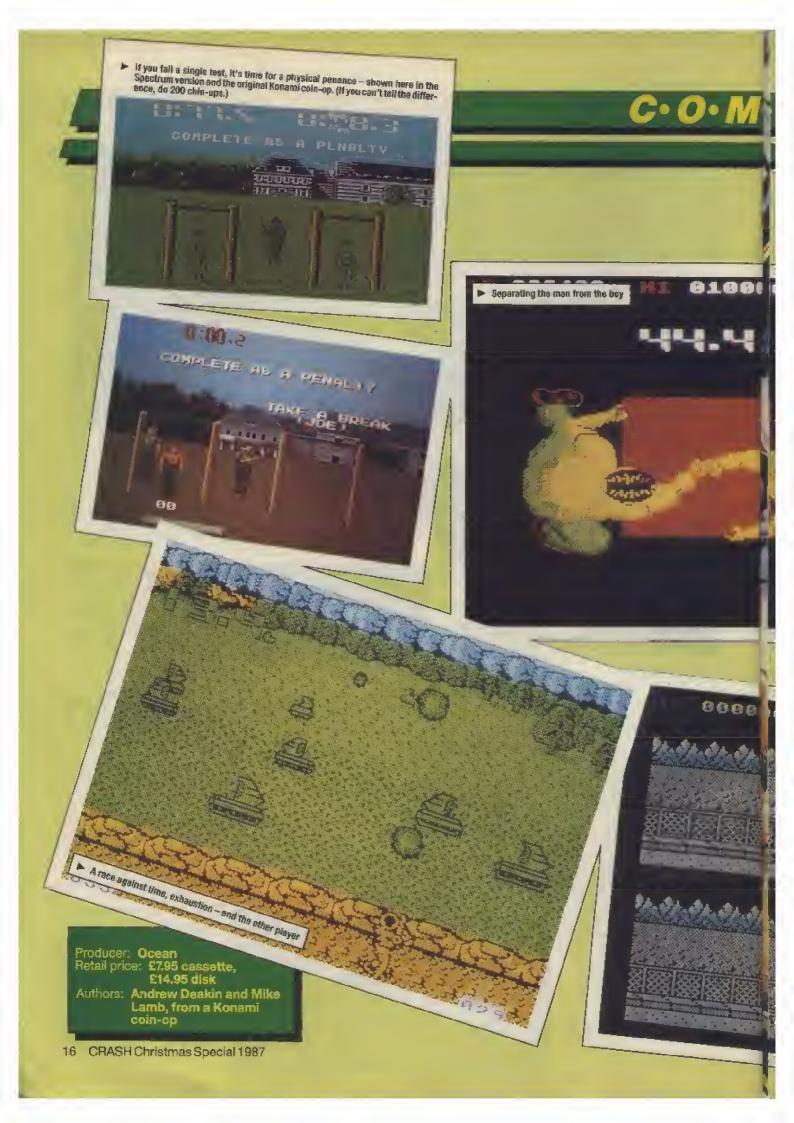
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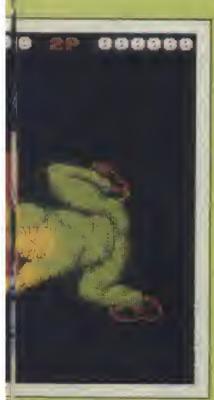
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B.A.T S.C.H.O.O.L





he guys who get through the US Marines Corps's combat school eat six Shredded Wheat for breakfast. And if you can join them and beat the time limit for completing seven gruelling tests in Ocean's Combat School coin-op conversion, you'll be a tough guy too — and there's a top-secret antiterrorist mission waiting to be done. waiting to be done.

waiting to be done.
Your training begins with an assault course: walls of different heights and an arm walk. A meter shows the muscular power you're generating, and if you can keep it up it's on to the next section, the first firing range.
Targets appear from the ground and remain in sight for just a few seconds — but at least 38 must be hit, blasted by moving a multidirectional cursor.

nit, biasted by moving a multidirec-tional cursor.

The next event is the 'iron man' race. Only a good running speed can see you successfully through rough country strewn with boulders, water hazards and bridges; then you swim across a fast-flow-

nen you swim across a rast-now-ing river fulf of logs.

Now you're exhausted – but the second firing range appears, and the challenge is to hit 95 robot tanks as they appear before you. From there it's on to show your bicep supremacy in an arm-wresti-

ing contest.

This man-to-man trial of muscles is different from all others at the school because even if you fail, you're allowed to carry on training. Normally the instructor's more ruthless - fall any other test and

And now your tingling arm must be brought under control, for accuracy is once more required on the third shooting range. As on the first, targets pop up for just a few seconds — but it's more complicated this time, because you have to avoid hitting red targets. Get cated this time, because you have to avoid hitting red targets. Get one by accident, and a whole screen of targets (and potential points) is lost to you.

The final end herdest stage of Combat School puts you into unarmed combat with an instruc-

"Combat School - the coinop, the game, the sweat, the joystick bilisters! This is a faithful conversion of the arcade original as it's almost impossible to complete (perhaps a few POKEs could deal with that!). Some of the stages are so gruelling it would be easier to do the tests in real life than in the computer version! The graphics couldn't be better, and the vivid colour (completely clashless), characters and backgrounds are all excellent. On the 128K version, there's excellent sound and the added luxury of not having to reload after a few levels. Combat School is brilliant on the 48K and the best 128K game around."

tor. You can throw punches and kicks, leap in to attack and leap sway again, and if you hit your opponent often enough and quickly enough you are the victor. But of course the opposite also applies — and if you fail this ultimate challenge you cannot oreduste.

For all that, there's some pity left in those Marine instructors. If you can't complete an event or amass enough points within its individual time limit, after the indignity of a

"This is one of the wic-"This is one of the wickedest packages around and guaranteed to destroy your joystick. There's plenty of variety, from swimming rivers to shooting tanks, and every level's playable and very addictive—you'll be surprised how much effort it can take to move a sprite! Combat School is one of the best games I've ever played."

DATE

33%

"There are very few games on the Spectrum that actually make you sweat while you're playing - Imagine's Hyper Sports is one, and Combat School (from the same software conglomerate) the latest. If you've played the arcade game and thought it could never be done on the Spectrum, think again. This is the machine's most successful arcade conversion yet. The machine's most successful arcade conversion yet. The graphics are superb, and the 128K sound is more than just impressive; it's some of the best around, with tunes playing even while you're struggling in the events! Two-player mode makes the game very competitive, almost adding a new dimension, and indeed Combat School is the ideal Christmas present for weaklings and strong for weaklings and strong men alike." PAUL 84%

few chin-ups you can return to the

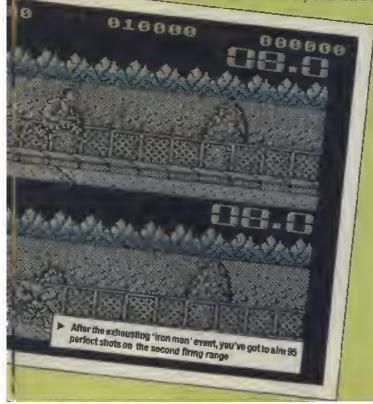
And if you do extra well in an event, bonus points do wonders for your prospects of promotion when it's all over.

But it's never all over for a US Marine - if you manage to graduate from the school, all your newly-acquired skills are needed on a mission to rescue a hostage from an American embassy.



Joysticks: Cursor, Kernpston, Shrotair Graphics: excellent, detailed, no clash Sound: stirring tunes Options: two-player option; definable keys; demo of Gryzor – another Konamicoint op conversion imminent from Ocean – on 128K tape. But one minus point: multiload is necessary on the 48K Spectrum. General rating: a hugely addictive challenge of speed, strength and coordination that looks and sounds good too

Presentation Graphics
Playability
Addictive qualities
OVERALL



BARTON BOLLEN M·A·T·C·H D·A·Y II ootball, as they say, Brian, is a great game', and now the jockstrap's on, the boots are laced, embrocation glistens on muscular thighs, and Match Day II— the long-expected reworking of programmer Jon Ritman's Match Day (86% Overalt in Issue 13, famous as the one we A great game, Brian STATE STATE THE PARTY OF Going for the goal Producer: Ocean Retail price: £7.95 Authors: Jon Ritman and Bernie Drummond O SOCCERATE 18 CRASH Christmas Special 1987



didn't Smash!) -is about to begin. So choose your teams and pre-pare to experience the full range of human emotions from 'over the moon' to 'as sick as a parrot'.

Your team can take part in a cup competition, a league chamcion-ship, or one-off competitions against others or the computer. The match time can be set to 5, 10

Jon Ritman has excelled himself with this outstanding follow-on from A Day; he's obviously taken in all the constructive criticlams of the earlier game, Match Day II has every Match Day II has every eption you could ever think of, and loads more as well the menus (all 17 of them!) are much easier and quicker to use than in Match Day, and the graphics have been improved. The back passes are a great addition and very useful. Only the sound lets it down a little; otherwise Match Day is top of the league! (Sorry.) "

or 15 minutes per haif, a skill level established and a choice made between attacking and defending

Each team has seven players, and a player gains possession of the ball when it hits him below the knee. (You can control two players at the same time if the ball is passed from one to the other.) The power of each player's kick is controllable, and can be locked

"Match Day it has all the good features of the earlier Match Day, adds several more and comes up with the definitive footbell game. There's just about every option, you could wish for - back kicks, corners, barging and two-player games are all available. The graphics are clear player games are all availa-ble. The graphics are clear and well-animated, with nice little jumps when the player attempts to head a ball. And Match Day II is one of the most compelling games this year – the com-puter isn't easy to beat even on the simplest of levels, so there's planty of gameplay, especially when you have two-player you have matches! " ROBIN two-player

on for shots at the goal mouth so you can use maximum force in an attempt to score.

Bouncing balls can be trapped if you carefully judge the height of the ball from the size of its shadow; dribbling and lofting are also possible, the latter done by kicking the ball while running.

And to create greater complex-ity and realism on the field, the Oia-mond Deflection System has been incorporated; when the ball strikes a player, its rebound takes into account not only the angle of the struck player, but also the direction in which he is moving and that of

If you decide to participate in a competition, fixtures are automatically decided and your opponents. skill increased as progress is made. But a code allows the com-petition to be saved and returned to later - so if your team isn't doing well you can have words with the

"For everyone who thinks kicking an inflated leather sphere around is fun, this will be THE game. Match Day II is a huge improvement on the original - not only is there now a vast front end of options menus, there've been some good. there've been some good changes made to the gameplay. It's the best football game around. 到直线

manager.
Programmer Jon Ritman and graphics man Bernie Drummond. have also worked together on the Ocean Smashes Batman and Head Over Heels (Issues 28 and

COMMENTS.

Joysticks: Cursor, 🗀 er, Kempston, Sinclair, Graphics: functional 3-D Sound: tune to open each match, and spot effects Options: definable keys, two-player option, all the menus you can eat General rating: Match Day is even better the second time round — there's more to co, and a skilled computer to

Presentation Playability Addictive qualities OVERALL 91%



RYGAR

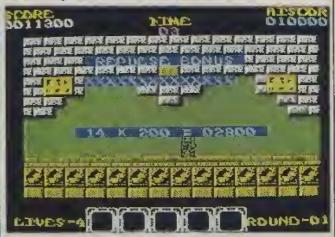
Producer: US Gold Retail price: £8,99 Authors: Probe Software,

from a Tecmo coin-op

uture time. The Earth's youth is a distant speck, BT has long been bankrupt and Cliff Richard has just retired.

MIKE

" You can tell just by looking at Rygar that it's a coin-op conversion - it actually looks like it wasn't written to run on a Spectrum. And that's exactly how it plays! The graphics are dull and uninterestingly coloured, the first lovel is far too easy and others offer no stimulation.



Rygar: acceptable, if you don't know the coin-op

Out of this mayhem has come Rygar, the legendary warrior. Strong and silent, he speaks but one language ... combat. Those who cross his dangerous path regret it - or at least they would if they lived.

they lived.

But there are still many who resent Rygar's rule and seek to destroy him with the deadily sweetness of their touch scuttling aardvarks, large-headed snerds, hideous harridans and grunting Goths, These are the dangers the warrior meets as he runs, ducks and leaps his way through the strange landscapes of the far future. the far future

Rygar fights with the power of thunderballs, unleashed upon attackers. But even his fighting skills cannot get the better of a treacherous world, and gaping chasms of incredible depth and darkness await the hero's final fall.

As the eternal struggle rages between life and death, Rygar grows in power by gathering the icons that are revealed when he blasts parts of the scenery. But as the heroic Rygar travels further on adventurous encounters ever more weird and deadly forms of futuristic life which (that's enough purple prose - Man

Probe Software's last release before Rygar was Trantor - The Last Stormtrooper (68% overall in Issue 46), for the GO! label run by US Gold. Trantor's graphics were highly praised, but the CRASH reviewers felt it, like Rygar, was too

PAUL

"Not being much of an arcade player – stuck in sleepy Ludlow – I'm usually disappointed by arcade conversions after all the hype they get, But the main problem, graphics, bas been overcome well in Rygar. The main character is a bit small, main character is a bit smail, but the colourful parallax scrolling adds depth to the play area, making it a joy to play. And though the first three levels are so easy they're unnecessary, subsequent levels are harder and create a very addictive game. Rygar is one of US Gold's better arcade

COMMENTS

Joysticks: Cursor, Kempston, Graphics: simple but not ugly Sound: spot effects
Options: definable keys
General rating: acceptably playable, though early levels are too easy; the reviewers' major criticism is that Rygan falls further short of its original than most coin-op conversions

Presentation Graphics Playability Addictive qualities OVERALL

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Have no fear, Lloyd Mangram's here Full of advice And Christmas cheer

And Christmas cheer...

Talking of which, it will be nice to have a few days off, without the thought of having to get the old bicycle out. Mind you, my form of five-minute relaxation in working hours recently has been a quick Atari ST bash on Audiogenic's Impact — the best Breakout clone of them all (but not on the Spectrum YET, alas).

As it's Christmas and a time of goodwill (rather than for the obvious reason all you cynics out there will fink of when you've and the letter). I will person the control of someone.

read the letter), I will paraphrase, it I may, the words of someone famous who once said that though the Lord likes all people, he rejoices most in a repentant sinner... and give you this month's letter which earns its sender £30 worth of software.

A PRODIGAL WRITES

Dear Lloyd I was an extremely contented subscriber for two years (Issues 16-42) and when it came to recharging my mystical number'
I'm straid that ... well ... I
didn't. For this, I blamed myself in
the knowledge that it was pure
taziness that I couldn't be bothered to post the letter; then I

thought again . . . Now I'm not a man that expects much out of life, but frankly I felt that the software industry was going a bit stale. Not much new or original. Nothing that took my tancy, inevitably I felt that CRASH was getting a bit stale around the edges too. In the Forum, for example, month after month you got the same old boring letters slagging off artwork, production techniques, et cetera, et cetera.

It was depressing.
For those reasons I clidn't feel guilty about letting my mystical number die, life was happier without it. However, last month I deprived to die dependent my decided to dig deep into my pockets and produce a pound coin for a copy because I was missing you lot a bit.

'Hang on, what's this? It's £1,25 now! Shock, horror, the country is going to the dogs etc.

Anyway, digging deeper into my pocket I found myself with an extra 25p so I purchased a copy . . . Having read it, I feel that to everyone at CRASH

congratulations are in order You've really pulled yourselves

togetheri A classified section, an organised video-reviewing section, someone new at Playing Tips (no offence Lloyd!), 3-D bits

etc etc.

'Ch, 'I groaned, 'what have I been missing?' As well as CRASH improving, I felt that there was a significant improvement in the quality of software (though it's not the hardly free of true to say that the barrel is free of all the rotten apples), whereas before I tell that the Industry had reached a metaphoric plateau of achievement.

It may take a month or so to scrounge the money for the subscription fee but prepare to welcome me back with open arms; Don Elliot, Beaworthy, NW

I can't promise a fatted calf (not in these days of cholesterol and health-consciousness anyway), but I'm sure you're welcome back (and anyway, why should I care if someone has once again nicked my Playing Tips, I've got a big heart). Talking of hire videos. with reference to the recent debate about whether or not CRASH should include reviews, just been shown some independent market research carried out on the streets of somewheresville, which asked people how often they hired video tapes. Out of some 15 'youth' littles (going to readers aged 12-20), CRASH came out with one of the highest figures. So you ARE interested in seeing up-to-date video reviews! Aren't you?

A MATTER OF RESEARCH

Dear Lloyd Just a few quick points, I am very pleased to see you are bringing back a score page. To me, this page used to be very interesting because it gave me a good idea of how good readers were at playing software (I sent my great achievements in a couple of times but they obviously couldn't match the successful readers). I hope Robin Candy's Scores turns out a

In Issue 46 I noticed the price had gone up to £1.25 – or did us readers pay 25p extra for some 3-D glasses? When I first bought CRASH In March 1985 (Issue 14) I paid 85p, which I thought was a reasonable price for a computer reasonable price for a computer magazine. Since then the price has risen by 40p, half the price I paid for Issue 14). Usreaders also paid money for the CRASH Sample which was said by you that it was free, Come on Lloyd, let's see

these prices dropped. Recently I wrote to several software houses asking for information on their products and a couple of posters. They returned me the following results

Activision - price list Advance – eight large posters and price list Alligata - one poster and price

CCS - one large poster and

price list Domark – price list and map of Doomdark's Revenge

Durell - two posters and price Electric Dreams - one poster

and price list Martech - three posters and price list

Mirrorsoft – three posters and price list

Quicksilva/Argus – price list Rainbird - two posters, price list and £3.00 voucher Ultimate - two posters and price list

US.Gold - no reply Virgin – price list Good research eh Lloyd? To finish off I've included my Top Ten chart for Speccy 48K games:

Milk Bacs Turbo Esprit

Zynaps

Grand Prix Simulator

Uridium Glider Rider Ping Pong

Starquake

Agent X Graham Easton, Lincoln

Good research eh? What does it prove except that US Gold gets letters than Advance? (Though I'm sure Rainbird will be getting the most now!) Also, I can't recall anyone saying the CRASH Sampler was FREE, the word used was EXTRA; and if you had read the Next Month panel in the previous CRASH, you would have

seen that we carefully made the point that the following Issue would cost 50p more than usual BECAUSE of the Sampler – it's all a matter of proper research, Graham, The price has risen by 40p, yes, but you're talking about a gap oftwo-and-a-halfyears! And last issue – 47 – had 148 pages against issue 14's 132; nearly against issue 14 s 132; hearly every screenshot is in colour now, and there is a full-time editorial staff of six (counting myself and an editorial assistant), double that of lissue 14, because the writing today has more research and consideration behind it. That, consideration behind it. That, besides the increasing costs of paper, printing, administration and all the little, overheads like light bulbs, is why the price has had to

WALLET VOTING V CROUCHERITIS

Having been a rubber-keyed Spectrum-owner since August 1984, and a CRASH reader ever since, I felt it was about time I put my £1.25's worth into the aeonian software debate

My first point concerns the notion of innevation. Ever since Mel Croucher opened this ugly can of worms, the argument has been along the lines of "the big software houses release nothing than coinops, rehashed ideas and licence deals with ne general traffice. deals with no game in them at all'

Without wanting to reiterate anything that Mr Croucher said in Issue 27, or what was subsequently written in the CRASH Forom, it is important to note that it is not the software houses nor the programmers who are to blame; it is the software-buying public, who vote with their wallets. The much-maligned companies are only producing



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over the tricky multi-choice questions to got the red snooker bails into the pockets. Then it's on to a colour I question for higher points, but you'll have to be quick because the higher the colour value the faster the er will od!

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what there is a demand for - and that does seem to be endless coin-

op conversions etc. In the Hotline Top 20 in the November issue, six games are conversions, and half the games are-shoot-'em-ups in one form or other. However, that is not to say that the same old formula is a

trial the same old formula is a floence to print money, but I shall come onto that in a moment. Fortunately, innovation is not necessarily synonymous with originality. The standard of current programmers and programming is still increasing at a steady rate, and hence new innovations in programming techniques are continually being developed. This is where the main problem of innovation seems to occur: a company spends a year developing a new game system for one single piece of software, but the game flops in the shops. And why is this? A disease I have labelled Croucheritis: the company has spent so much time on the implementation of an idea

on the implementation of an idea or technique that it lorgot to put a game in the package as well, in the long run, stunning graphics or digitised sound or whatever is only the long on the cake; it is the playability that really courts. courts. No matter what the game is, no matter how assounding the programming may be, no matter how original the idea is, if the game suffers in any way from its playability, it is of no use to the

Poor response to controls, doubtful collision-detection, painfully slow scrolling or whatever will mean the eventual downfall of a game, even if it has the most impressive windows. the most impressive window-dressing ever seen. The bad news is that it is this window-dressing that persuades the casual purchaser to part with his hard-earned pennies. He sees the game running in the shop, perhaps he has seen it previewed in a magazine and is superficially impressed. One rainy afternoon later, all he has for his cash is six minutes of noisy code and a cassette that is useless even as a later.

This is where magazines like CRASH become so important: they can get beneath the giffwrapping and find the actual game inside. These findings can then be conveyed to the readership, and they then have someone else's opinion, other than the publisher's or programmers's as to the game's merits. Unfortunately, I feel CRASH has not been doing its duty in this department. I am not talking about previews, even though these are often misleading In that they make some quite average games seem exciting. But this is something that is inherent in the very nature of a preview; there'd be no point in showing us what is to come if it is nothing but dross and it has always been clear, in CRASH if not in certain others, that you have not seen a complete game, only a demo or some screenshots. What I am going on about is the reviews.

Obviously, a magazine is in a continual state of flux, forever trying to improve its content and design to woo more readers. Most of the changes within CRASH have been cosmetic as opposed to ideological and have improved the magazine over its four-year life. However, CRASH must not forget why it is there; it is essentially a software-review magazine. On this point I have to agree with Ian Kerr (Issue 46 Forum) on criticising the comment box at the end of the review. In fact, I have noticed a general drop in the standard of

reviews over the last year. Reviews have (with certain exceptions) been far shorter in an attempt to cram more games in. This is fine as far as the description of the game part goes, as we can read all that on the cassette inlay In our local store, but it is not so satisfactory when appertaining to the player's criticism, which in some cases is brief to the point of obscurity. It no longer tells us enough for us to judge for ourselves without actually buying the game – when it becomes too late. One example in the November issue was on page 28 in the Action Force review where Paul remarks ' , . . though the idea is simple the awkward control method makes its appeal short-

what 'awkward' control
method? Since the keyboard-play
and control-keys comments are
no longer part of the review there
is nowhere to look to find out. What
lam trying to say is that the reviews should become more detailed as games become more complex, rather than less so. If space is the key factor, then it seems logical to keep the reviews short, but have a much larger and all-encompassing comments box at the end of the review, or a system of notes rather than solid editorial.

All this said, I still find that the reviews in CRASH are the most reliable by far, and an important source of reference before buying any new game,

I'd like to finish on a lighter (if somewhat cynical) note. As we are continually informed by the media, Christmas is once again around the comer and with it come the highly prestigious CRASH Readers' Awards. I'd like to propose a new category – the most overrated game of the year. This would differ from the worst game of the year in that any game an be bad, but it takes something to convince us that it is great, and only now in retrospect do we wonder why we over played it, let alone bought it.

Past winners could have included Jet Set Willy - for being programmed in such a way that the game was impossible to finish without cheating due to the Attic Bug and an invisible object that couldn't be reached. Sabrewulf for being nothing but a reworking of Atic Atac but with trees.

Wizard's Lair - for being a slightly more complex conglomeration of Atic Atac and Sabrewulf. Knight Lore - yes, the graphics were amazing but it's a shame Ultimate forgot to put in a game, Sherlock— which opened up new frontiers in

interactive boredom.

No doubt I'll be burned as a heretic for taking the names of some of the industry's sacred cows in vain but such an award, as all awards, can only be made from purely subjective opinions.

Keep up with the good work,

Anthony Ruben, Beckenham, Kent

Seriously, is it really necessary to know WHAT the awkward control method is? Surely knowing that control method is 7 Surely knowing that a trustworthy reviewer considers the control method awkward is enough. You don't have to know why it's awkward. And after all, if you haven't bought it and played it you'll never really understand why the control method is hutward assured.

last rew issues more betaus on how the game plays have been going in the long descriptive introduction (where minor aspects of scenario are now omitted) rather

than in the criticisms; and sometimes there's just not much to say about a game other then a quick summary of graphics and gameplay! It would, of course, be

possible to go to abourd langths, drop all features and regular

columns and give each review a

few pages, delving into the minutiae of every sprite and ecroll. Should we do this? What do other readers think? What does the next letter think?

NO COMMENT

Dear Lloyd I am writing about Ian Kerr's letter in CRASH Issue 46.

Thave been getting CRASH since Issue 2 and I agree with lan completely that the comments box is getting too.small,

I would prefer it if you kept the comments on keyboard control and skill levels, too - Illke to know how many keys the game has



i used to decide to buy a game just by reading the CRASH review but now I have to go down the city centre just to look at the inlay card, to see whether it has got enough screens and to make sure there

aren't too many keys etc.
Ihope that enough people write
in to make you change it back to
CRASH's old standard.

Gary Harris, Headington, Oxford

You obviously have this thing about keys, Garyl But you should bear in mind that if there are - by common consensus - too many



keys, or a spectacular (or disappointing) number of screens, the reviewers and comments box can, and do, still mention it. The can, and do, still mention it. The point of reducing the comments box wasn't to rule out mentioning some aspects of a game – just to avoid being tied to a routine of listing control keys, screens etc when they were quite Irrelevant to the value and interest of the game. And the function of the comments box and percentages is to summarise, not supplement or justify, the criticisms; which was the point Ian Kerr missed.



CONFUSED ...?

Dear Lloyd As a trusty reader of your wonderful magazine (slurp slurp, lick lick) I am writing to you, my ageny uncle, for some helpful advice, which I am sure you can give. I wouldn't mind paying £2.25 for the magazine as long as you're still there (i hope flattery gets me everywhere).

I have recently sold my feithful Thave recently soid my faithful Spacey (rubber-key version) so that I can purchase a (hopefully) better computer. 'What could be simpler?' I hear you cry! Well, first of all I thought about buying a Spectrum +2, then an Atari; I've even contemplated rebuying my old Spacey. I have allottenage. d Speccy. I have nightmares where all these computers are crying out to be bought. Every time see a computer I think of buying

the search of th

programming.
By the way, don't let your judgment be swayed by whether i'll still buy CRASH after I've got my new computer, because whatever computer I have I'll always buy CRASH (not really). So please help me solve my dilemma. Jonathan Khan, Broxbourne,

You have an easy life of it, dear You have an easy life of it, dear boy (said he putting on his agenised-uncle voice). Try growing up and becoming a businessman who needs a new computer AND THEN SEE what an impossible choice there is! No, you're enjoying the best days of your life at the moment. Sounds like you need a +2 and some change left over; because there wouldn't be much from the purchase of an Attri, not with all purchase of an Atari, not with all the bits you discover you really need. (Back to Lloyd voice . . .). LM

THREE-DEE

Dear Lloyd When I bought the November issue of CRASH I found these strange glasses in it. I tried them out on the special pictures and wow, brilliant, then a thought struck me (out of the blue like): why can't the software houses use the same technique?

Think of games like Starglider with this 3-D style. It would bring a totally new perspective to the graphics. The graphics would aimost come out of the screen or go back to give depth. This may bring some problems like collision-detection but these could be overcome.

On a different note, here is my Top Five for 48K music: 1 Agent X 2 Chronos

- Ping Pong Top Gun Shart Gircuit

Stephen Newell, Lordswood,

It has already been tried, years ago. Postem released a game called Three-Deep Space and it was a technical disaster (the game wasn't too hot either): the glasses were uncomfortable to wear and estrain, and seemed to ayestrain, caused eyestrain, and the spaceships seemed to be repeated as though you had just drunk too much elcohol. However, Mastertronic were showing a 3-D Sega game with glasses on their PCW Show stand, and I'm told that were suite offertile. Other that was quite effective. Other-wise, I should stick to Freescape — it's the new dimension!

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GOING TO BED WITH BED WITH BED WITH BED WITH

CRASH is a rare beast among magazines — everything short of the printing is done by a small team based in Ludlow, Shropshire. Here's a short tour of the process, from writing to the final details of design.

To 300,000 readers, CRASH's public face is its writers - and none is more written-to than Playing Tips Editor Nick Roberts. Spending hours at the Towers after school every day, Nick tests all the tips and POKEs that arrive (well, nearly all . . .) and files them for future use. Choosing each month's maps is a task too - there's never enough space, and that's the perennial complaint of writers and editors (except when the deadline is really close and they start complaining there's too much space to fill). Meanwhile, other writers at the Ludlow headquarters are working on reviews and features, while out-of-house columnists like Philippa Irving and Simon N Goodwin slave away over hot Spectrums in their own corners of the country, phoning in occasionally to discuss what they're writing. And as the games come in for review, photographers Cameron Pound and Michael Parkinson burry to get the screenshots taken always shooting as many as possible in case the game's an unexpected Smash!

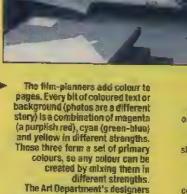


designers Markie Kendrick (pictured) and Wayne Allen make It look like a magazine. They stick the strips of text down on boards the size and shape of a GRASH page, leaving spaces for pictures, blowing up (enlarging) or reducing (shrinking) headlines on a process camera, and remembering all the fiddly bits like keylines (the lines that separate parts of the page) and page numbers. Black-and-white pictures are made into photomechanical tints (PMTs) on the process camera – because mond photos are made up of every shade from black to white, but a printing press can enable and the printing press can enable up of every shade from black to white, but a printing press can enable up of every shade from black dots and white dots, so it can be used for printing, but it simulates shading by subty increasing the concentration of black dots as an area grows feesign.



darker, (If you look at any of the pictures on this page through a powerful magnifying glass you'll see exactly how it works.)
When all that's done the patches arrive – single lines or paragraphs of text typeset again with mistakes corrected. They have to be stuck down in the right place, and sometimes it's a race against time to get the corrections.

Finally, the page is ready for colour mark-up... and by now someone in film-planning is probably breathing down the Art Department's neck,



Copy (the journalist's and ad man's jargon for written material) comes back from the typesetter on bromide paper in long strips of text. It's photocopied so the aditors can sheck for any mistakes — you always miss something on the screen, somethow—and sent up to the Art Department where

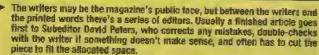
The Art Department's designers mark each page with the mixture of colours required – for instance, the Forum page on the back of this was marked '50% yellow, 30% magenta', (it's just a colour cocktall, really.)

prepare a film for each of the three colours, by masking out the bits that aren't that colour and shooting it on a special camera. Another piece of film is shot for the ordinary black text and keylines. And all that's done for every page. But the millions of shades on colour photos are far too complex to do by hand, so they're sent to Scan Studies in north London where a laser-scanning machine does the same job, producing those four films (called separations) for each picture. The separations come back to Ludlew where they're stotted into the page's film. When every page has been shot to film, the Issue 'goes to bed' — work's finished for the Ludlow

Then the film-planners

work's finished for the Ludlow team (except the Production Controller, standing by to deal with any last-minute printing problems — and the accountants waiting for the money to fleed in!) We send those films to Carlisle Web Offset, they run off 130,000 copies and ...

and ... Here it is,



Then the polished product comes to Managing Editor Barnaby Page (pictured), for a final read-through before it goes on an Amstrad disk and down the road to Tortoise Shell Press, a local printing company which typesets at all CRASH, ZZAPI 64 and THE GAMES MACHINE.

Besides choosing pictures, writing sarcastic captions and hurrying everyone else, Barnaby also puts typesetting codes in the article so it comes out in the correct size and typeface – blame him for the occasional mi stakes Lik. Othis.



Late one evening...







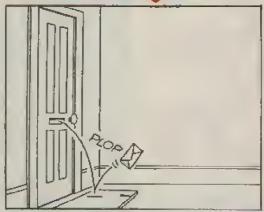
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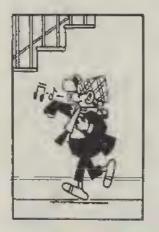


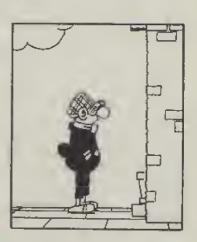




...next day...







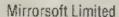
...success



Cartoons by Reg Smythe

ANDY CAPP Out for Christmas on

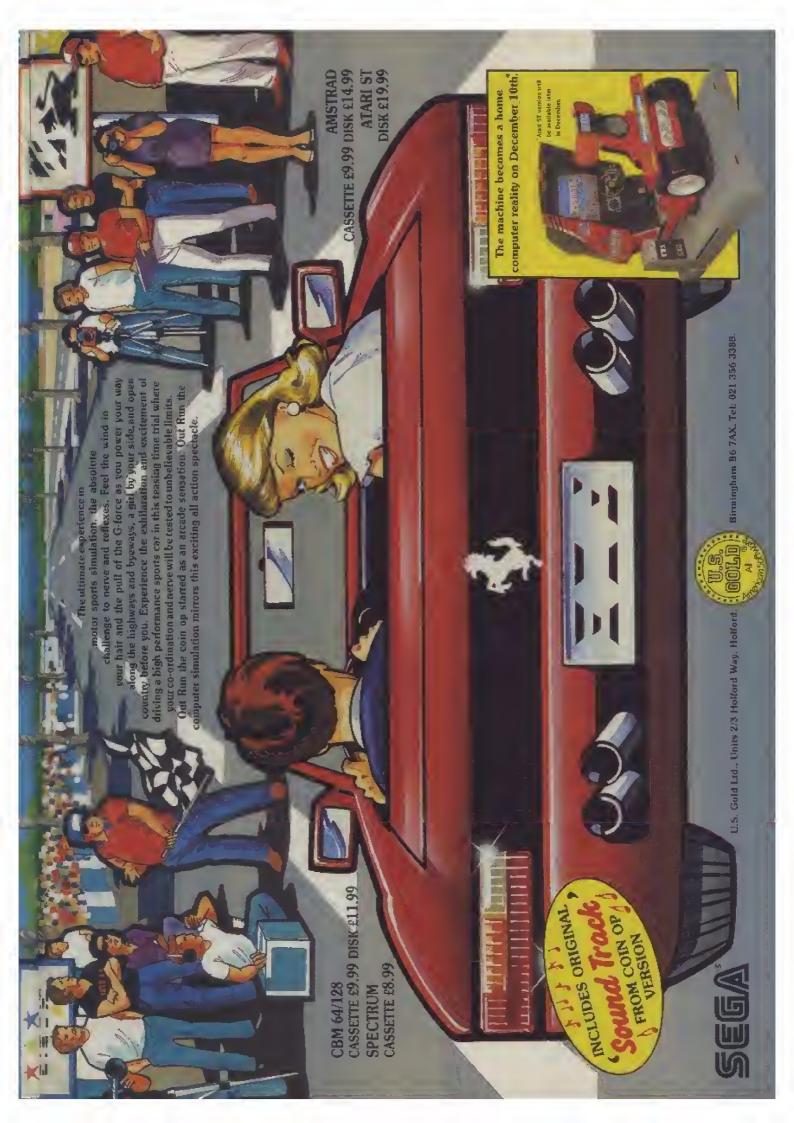
Spectrum, Commodore, Amstrad From good software shops everywhere

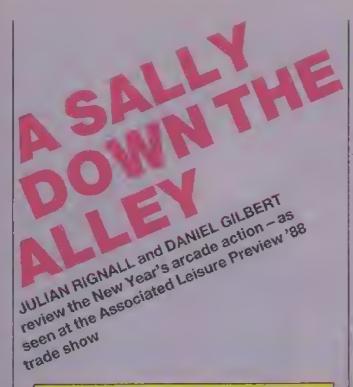


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1111, 1111, 1111, a tank full of gas and an open road.... the rest is up to you... oure cool, the engine's hot, the girls gon





SUPER SELECT SYSTEM

Arcadia

subsidiary company, has just released the Super Select System, a multiplay arcade machine based on its Amiga

loard system. The system comes in two formats: Sports Simulation and Arcade Action, and each has five different

SPORTS

■ Like the Arcade Action package, Sports Simulation offers a wide variety of games, most of which have been converted from home computers.

One of the most notable conversions is Arcade Leaderboard, a slightly tweaked version of the classic US Gold golfing game (80% Overall in Issue 39) which retains all the original's playability. You play the course against a time limit, and trees, bunkers, rivers and lakes make the going extremely fough. Extra features include sampled voices, an animated instruction screen and a map of the course. It's certainty an unusual and very entertaining arcade game - go for a

The highly successful budget darts game, 180, has been given the arcade treatment and renamed World Darts (Mastertronic's Spectrum version earned 72% in Issue 35). In gameplay it's virtually identical to the computer game, and the player challenges a series of increasingly adept computer opponents at a match of 501. The graphics and sound are both superb, and the gameplay has a lovely feet. World Daris Isn't the sort of game you'd expect to find in an arcade, but it's surprisingly addictive.

SportTime Bowling, however, is a very weak bowling simulation based on the dire Strike budget game (40% from M.A.D. in Issue 41). It doesn't play well, the graphics and sound are poor and it hardly captures the limits of bowling. Not

nardly captures the thrills of bowling. Not one to break open a piggy bank for ... Offering more playability but also suffering from weak graphics is SportTime Table Hockey, a simulation of the one-on-one air-hockey games often found in seaside areades. The fast action is enjoyable at first, but it doesn't take long to lose its appeal.

Pool is a difficult name to convert to a

Pool is a difficult game to convert to a video format, but Arcadia has managed to capture the game's feel and spirit with

Pool and its realistic ball movements.

Pool and its realistic ball movements.

Pool and the pool of the best games of its type, and should be checked out.

Arcadia is also planning Basketball, Football and Tennis simulations specially for the States Select Statem. for the Super Select System - we'll keep



ARCADE ACTION

■ The Arcade Action setup offers five games, ranging from a traditional beat-lem-up to an unusual concept of sport in

the future.
Ninja Mission is a conversion of the beat-'em-up/arcade Commodore adventure. The player takes control of a ninja hero and enters the evil Akuma's palace to retrieve seven stolen jade idols. battling gangs of savage guards

The graphies are excellent, with lovely character-animetion, and some neat backdrops, it shouldn't take beat-'em-up experts too long to complete the mission, but Ninja Mission is highly enjoyable nonetheless

Blasta Ball is, again, based on a (mildly addictive) Commodore game, Hyperbowi. Viewing the scrolling action from above, you take control of a ship, trying to drive a large moving puck into the opponents. goal. The concept is very simple, and unfortunately it doesn't his the mark as an arcade game. The graphics are colourful, but the gameplay just isn't addictive enough to spend more than a few 10ps ΠΠ

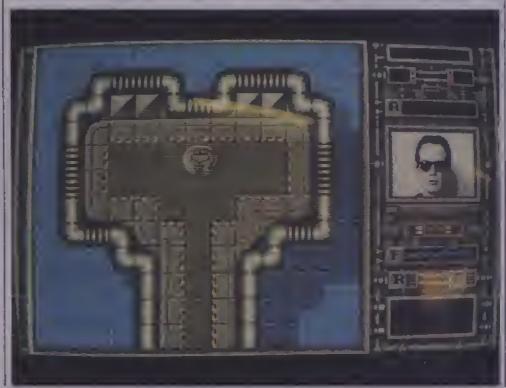
For shoot-'em-up fans there's Xenon, a vertically-scrolling progressive blaster. A craft which can change from tank to aircraft is guided through 16 sectors of frenetic action, gathering extra weapons as the mission progresses to create a very impressive armoury. Each sector has its own guardian which most be destroyed to progress to the next, and none give up without a fight!

The action is fast and furious and the graphics are really spectacular -especially some of the large allens, *Kenon* is a very enjoyable and extremely addictive shoot-'em-up, well worth checking out.

The other two games on Arcade Action are Space Ranger and Sidewinder. The former is a horizontally-scrolling shoot-'em-up and the latter requires the player

to pilot a craft through a 3-D maze. Neither were ready at the show, but sound promising.

Fast and furious action in Xenon



AAARGH Arcadia

Among Arcadia's new dedicated games is Asargh, a mashing, smashing game where one or two players can be a pair of terrible monsters — Godzilla and a giant Cyclops — and go on the rampage through a series of towns and cities. The action is displayed in 3-0, with the monsters walking 'in' and 'out' of the screen.

The first port of call is a tribal village. The first port of call is a tribal village, and the gruesome twosome stride around the village, smashing down houses and setting mem argin. As buildings are wrecked, the inhabitants stream out and are stomped to death, picked up and eaten – very enjoyable!

Beneath one of the houses is an egg, which is revealed only when the building is razed to the ground. If the egg is picked up, both players get the chance to increase their score in a bonus stage. The moristers face one another and fight the

increase their score in a bonus stage. The modisters face one another and fight, the winner cialming the egg and a large points bonus. After this violent interlude, both creatures return to stomp and smash the next location. Later stages include Egypt, the Wild Frontier, China and a Greek temple:

The destructive gameplay is straightforward but extremely

and a Greek temple:

The destructive gameplay is straightforward, but extremely coording, and the highly detailed graphics and superb sound effects enhance the action immensely. Asargh is one of the best arcade releases in months.





STREET FIGHTER

Capcom

■ Capcom's latest (which CRASH previowed in Issue 44) is a traditional one-or-lwo-player beat-'em-up played across a series of backdrops, very much in the Karate Champ mould. However, it adds a new dimension with pneumatic punch buttons, large rubber pads that are bashed to make the onscreen fighter punch out — and the harder they're thumped, the more powerful the hd.

The action is certainly grafifying, with great feedback from the buttons, but once the navetty of hitting the machine wears off there's very little to draw you hack

ROADWARS Arcadia

 Road Wars is Arcadia's one-on-one 3-D shopt-tem-up in which one or two players drive battlespheres (futuristic tanks) up an infinitely long road and destroy oncoming hazards.

The action is very simplistic, and there's little to do other than dodge or blast approaching objects. It doesn't take long for it to lose its appeal.

Beat those buttons in Street Fighter



ROCKFORD Arcadia

■ Rockford, the arcade version of First Star's evergreen classic Boulderdash (remember the Front Runner Spectrum version back in 19847-93% in Issue $12\ldots$), is now finished and ready to enter the arcades.

There are 40 levels set across ten different worlds, each having its own theme, with the dirt, boulders, diamonds, and even Rockford himself taking on a

different appearance in each.

But the graphics and sound are disappoliting, and the gameplay is very tough, requiring lots of skill and an understanding of the game's workings.

AFTERBURNER

Sega

■ Sega, maker of Super Hang-On and Out Run, has just released its most imprassive-looking game yet — Afterburner, an aerial-combat simulation. The player takes control of a high-powered jet and files over 23 stages, destroying as many enemy planes and installations as possible.

The game comes in three lormats—two sit-ins and a stand-up cabinet, complete with #ashing lights. The more expensive of the sit-ins is very impressive, and rocks and rolls as the plane banks and moves. The cheaper version tilts left and right only.

You're first struck by the colourful and incredibly fast graphics — possibly the tastest 3-D yet seen! The ground rushes by beneath you at an awesome speed, and enemy planes zoom in from the distance at an alarming rate.

If the plane is going fast enough and

If the plane is going last enough and the joystick is wrenched left or right, the plane rolls and the entire screen spins disconcertingly. Occasionally enemy planes and homing missiles close in from behind, and this is where the afterburner throttle comes into play – pulling this back sends the plane roaring off at a tremendous speed, with luck losing the pursuers in the process. At regular

intervals a large bomber flies over and the plane is automatically refuelled and rearmed in miday.

There are also two airfields which the shattered player can land on for a welcome break from the fractic action. (By the way, if you look very carefully when the plane lands on the first strip, a Super Hang-On bike comes out of the trees and races up the first airstrip as the plane takes off, And on the second strip, the Ferrari from Out Run makes an appearance!)

All this is very impressive, but unfortunately the playability is exceptionally poor. The plane doesn't handle very well, and the feedback from the joystick Isn't at all good. Waggling it from right to left is a good tactic to avoid attackers, and pressing the afterburners when treing chased is about all there is to it. It doesn't take much practice to complete the game, and the anding is plitful—the plane lands and a few poorly-drawn screens are displayed.

drawn screens are displayed.

Many arcades are charging more than 50p for just one go, which is a vast overpricing. Afterburner may be impressive to lock at, but it's not very enjoyable to play.



 Afferburner 'colourful and incredibly tast 3-D graphics', but overprised and underinteresting



CRASH & SPECTRUM SOFTWARE HISTORY BINDERS

Lloyd Mangram's CRASH & Spectrum Software History, which is concluded this issue, adds up to 96 pages; 48 pages telling the four-year story of CRASH magazine and the Spectrum software world, and 48 full-colour reproductions of CRASH covers by artists Oliver Frey and Ian Craig.

Rather than leaving the CRASH & Spectrum Software History in several separate issues, many readers will want to keep the collection together.

And so CRASH & Spectrum Software History binders will be available by mail order for £4,50 each (£6,50 outside mainland UK), postage and packing included.

That price includes reprints of Lloyd Mangram's Lookbacks for the years 1984, 1985 and 1986, and a selection of special articles on the development of the Spectrum and its software.

This, together with other recently-published material designed for the binder, will form a unique CRASH book of over 150 pages (complete with title and contents pages).

The firm blue binders, similar to the annual CRASH magazine binders (which are available through the Hypermarket on page 166) and subdivided into sections with sturdy plastic rods, will have room for:

- the 96 pages of the CRASH History
- the complete index of CRASH reviews (in this issue)
- the complete index of CRASH playing tips and maps (in next issue)
- the complete index of CRASH features (in next issue)
- Lloyd Mangram's four Lookbacks at the years 1984, 1985, 1986 and 1987
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The CRASH & Spectrum Software History binder is available now with the form below (or a copy of it). Please allow the usual 28 days for delivery.



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CHRISTM COLLECTIONS

ELITE gives its old hits a new lease of life on the compilation label Hit Pak, The latest compilation is *The Elite Collection*, a strong two-cassette assembly of well-known Elite classics. They're all very playable, ranging from the very old Bombjeck and innovative Frank Bruno's Boxing to carent successes such as to recent successes such as Paperboy and Ghosts 'N Goblins, And on the second cassette is a previously unreleased. Eithe game, Battleships—yes, a Spectrum version of the pencil-and-paper classic. But to buy it all at £14.95 you'd have to be a dedicated

PAXMAN PROMOTIONS, a subsidiary of the Prism Leisure Corporation, has released two 'theme' compilations - which Paul Summer predicted in Issue 45 would be the things of the future, after the success of Ocean's Game Set And Match. At £4.99 each Paxman's Thriller Pack and Sports Pack represent good value, but satily the games aren't that attractive. The six loosely related company or The Matchine. loosely-related games on *The Thriller Pack*, all previously released, are more memorable for their bype than as actual games. And *The Sports* Pack is a poor man's Game Set And

US GOLO's recent compilation Summer Gold is now partnered by Solid Gold - probably the house's greatest compilation yet! Every game is very playable, and the collection covers a wide range from flight simulators like infiltrator and Ace Of Aces to the CRASH Smashes Winter Games and Gauntlet. Sadiy Leaderboard didn't hit it off with the Spectrum like the others did, but it still fits in the package well.

you're still last-minute looking for last-minute presents or someone's chaque is burning a hole in your pocket, you're bound to find something to light your candle in the Christmas season's spate of compilations,

compilations.

They come from software houses large and small, specialised and general; they range from £4.99 to £14,95; they come in all shapes and sizes, from boxes, a foot long to laminated video-size boxes down to the (now) ordinary double-cassette boxes (for which we still have no racks!). You may not have anywhere to put all these different sizes; but they sure look pratty on the retailer's shelf.

But some small independent retailers have great problems with the big, bold packaging of compilations, and when space is light they usually end up at the bottom of the pile.

bottom of the pile.

And some compilations aren't even available in Independent shops this Christmas—not because of the packaging, but because they're distributed on limited exclusive deals with high-street multiples. For Instance, Grømlin Graphics's Ten Great Games is currently only available from chains like WH Smith and Menzies, It's strange the indies are treated this way when they account for 75% of all software sales. sales . . .

DOMINIC HANDY reviews compilations

HEWSON is eschewing the more-is-better theory of many compilations and putting just four Smash bits on a tape entitled exactly that. Four Smash Hits includes two of this year's top shoot-'em-ups — Exolon and Zynaps — as well as Ranarama and (like Beau Jolly's Five Star Games Vol. 3) Uridium Pius. It's available on ±3 disk as well as cassette

OCEAN's compilations always provide value for money. In October Game Set And Match sent Spectrum sportsmen crazy, in November the shoot-lem-up collection Live Ammu arrived and now Ocean tooks set to have a happy Christmas and a VERY prosperous New Year with the final 1987 release, The Magnificent 7. And guess

how many games are on it ... eight!

If you thought Ocean's previous compilations were not stuff, wait till The Magnificent 7 melts the snow with Ocean's greatest hits — like the mind-blowing Frankle Goes To Hollywood and Head Over Heels, accade adventures such as The Great Escape and Short Circuit, leaders in their class like the mindless Cobra, and bat and ball with Arkanoid.

And the most interesting addition is Wizball. Reviewed in CRASH issue 45 just a few months ago, it gained a Smashing 92%, and here it is already on an action-packed compilation.

Ocean is backing the +3 with a disk version of The Magnificent 7.

GREMLIN GRAPHICS are the ones to GREM IN CHAPMICS are the ones to call if you're looking for ten great games... and Gremlin's Ten Great Games compilation gets the CRASH award for Hope-Raising Packaging Of The Month! The box measures 38em x 20cm and looks tremendous, but it holds a measily bun cassettes. 38em x 20cm and looks tremendous, but it holds a measty two cassettes. There's a whole range of Gremtin goodles on those two tapes, though: the attractive Monty On The Run, the gun-toting West Bank and even the original Jack The Nipper.

And for those of you who prefer playing with balls they've also included Bounder, Trailbiazer, Footballer Of The Year and Krakout

Footballer Of The Year and Krakout At just a pound per game this title (or should that be massive?) package is great value for money - and it filts the

stocking up!

BEAU JOLLY Is track on the compilation wagon, and the nouveau Beau Jolly is launching a two-pronged attack on the Christmas market with two collections and a £100,000 TV ad campaign for them. The fourth in the series of 10 Computer Hits Includes the Marble Madness clone Spin Dizzy and the Gauntiet clone Dandy. But pick of the bunch is either Pyracurse or Contact Sam Cause, both CPASH Smashes. And though Five Star Games Vol. 3 has lewer games than 10 Computer Hits, it's probably the better package. It's hard to choose between such greats as Strike Force Harrier, Tau Ceti, Fineierd, Allens, The Way Of The-exploding Fist and Uniform Plus (an Improved version of the Issue 35 Smash).

CRASH Overall percentages and review issue numbers are given efter each game. N/R denotes 'not reviewed'.

ELITE COLLECTION

HILL I SAY	
Bombjack	92% 27
Bombjack II	71% 39
Frank Bruno's Bexing	86% 19
Communus	94% 24
Airwolf	90% 13
Battleships	NA
Paparboy	88% 33
Ghosts 'N Goblins	95% 30
	£14.95

THE THRILLER PACK

Paxman Promotio	ns
A View To A Kill	78% 18
Friday The 13th	32% 29
Code Name Mat II	B1% 20
Pyrismld	83% 2
Test Motch Cricket	N/A
Booky And The Egg Snatchers	79% 7
	£4,99

10 GREAT GAMES

arenini etahines	
Avonger	85% 38
Future Knight	70% 36
Krakout	45% 40
Bounder	90% 29
Footballer Of The Year	68% 37
Trailbiszer	88% 34
Highway Encountur	95% 20
Monty On The Run	94% 20
West Bank	84% 25
Jack The Nipper	93% 30
	69.95

THE MAGNIFICENT

/ ·	
Ocean	
Hend Over Hoels	97% 39
Cobra	93% 35
Short Circuit	71% 40
Frankle Goes To Hollywood	94% 19
Arkanold	59% 39
Wizball	92% 42
The Great Escape	86% 35
Yle Ar Kung Fu	92% 25
C2559	HD £9.95
/ +3 dis	k £17.95

THE SPORTS PACK

Paxman Promot	tions
Snooker	N/R
On The Oche	N/R
World Cup Football	71% 7
Olympics	45% 5
St Andrew's Galf	N/R
Darby Day	N/R
	£4.99

SOLID GOLD

WO WOULD	
Gauntlet	92% 37
Ace Of Aces	62% 35
Leadarboard	80% 39
Winter Games	93% 26
Infiltrator	72% 35
	29.99

FOUR SMASH HITS

Hewson	
Exolon	90% 43
Zyneps	91% 42
Rangrama	90% 38
Uridium Plus	90% 35
	cassette £9.95
	+ 3 digk #14 95

COMPUTER

11110 VOL. 4	
Beau Jolly	
Bride Of Frankonstein	59% 43
Contact Sam Cruise	83% 36
Spindizzy	93% 29
Uchi Mata	35% 39
City Slicker	65% 35
Secred Armour Of Antiriad	88% 35
Deactivetors	85% 34
Starquake	96% 22
Pyracurse	90% 31
Pulsator	56% 42
Revolution	91% 33
Dandy	84% 35
	59.95
	2000

FIVE STAR HITS VOL. 3

	Beau Jolly	
	Uridium Plus "	90% 35
	Trapdoor	88% 33
	Tau Ceti	94% 23
	Fireland	91% 35
	Allens	84% 37
	The Way Of The Exploding Fist	92% 21
ı	Strike Force Harrier	83% 33
		COST ENG.



MIKE DUNN, daring, dedicated and modest 13-year-old; screen assessor extraordinaire takes to the keys of his Spectrum for a look at your screen art



Kicking off this month is a selection of excellent, though somewhat odd, pictures by Andraw Gordon of Bieldside, Aberdeen. The first one is called *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles* (or TMNT to its friends), doubtless related to the zany atternative comic of the same name. The colour clash is a bit unfortunate, but at least it makes a change from non-of-the-mill ninja

Sean Contan of Chipperfield in Nertfordshire sent in a fun little demo of scrolling screens. The first one is very similar to Stephen Rill's version of the Sqt Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band cover, On The Screened in Issue 44 -- but there's a nice, simple use of colour, and the faces of the band are accurate and easily recognisable.

Right, that's it till next month, when (with the usual barefaced editorial lie) I'm promised more space. Keep the weird, wonderful and just plain amusing SCREEN\$ coming and remember every one printed gets a full-colour framed and mounted screen dump courtesy of Rainbird, so a big hand to Rainbird for that.

The address is: MIKE DUNN, ON THE SCREEN, CRASH, PO Box 10, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1DB. There's no closing date, of course, but your SCREEN\$ may not appear for a few months.

Next out of the proverbial hat is Sean Conran's Conran The Artist (any relative of the nearly-eponymous Barbarian?). The snake graphic is excellent; unfortunately the colour on Coaran himself is a bit dubious, but it's still effective, bright and well-drawn.



Again from Andrew Gordon comes the horrifying Ward 13. And again it's a pity about the colour, as the picture works better in mone—but it's very effective nonetheless. Is that a human hand disappearing into the door? The per not. I'll get lots of latters from *The Bug* about the corrupting influence of my SCREEN's on the younger generation, and we wouldn't want that, now, would



On dear, There's always one, isn't there? Gavin Marshalt of Orpangton in Kent wrote asking for an extension to the On The Screen logo competition, which of course isn't possible (the winner's at the top of this page!) – but as his Michael Jackson lookalike portrait's so good it had to make it to the gallery.



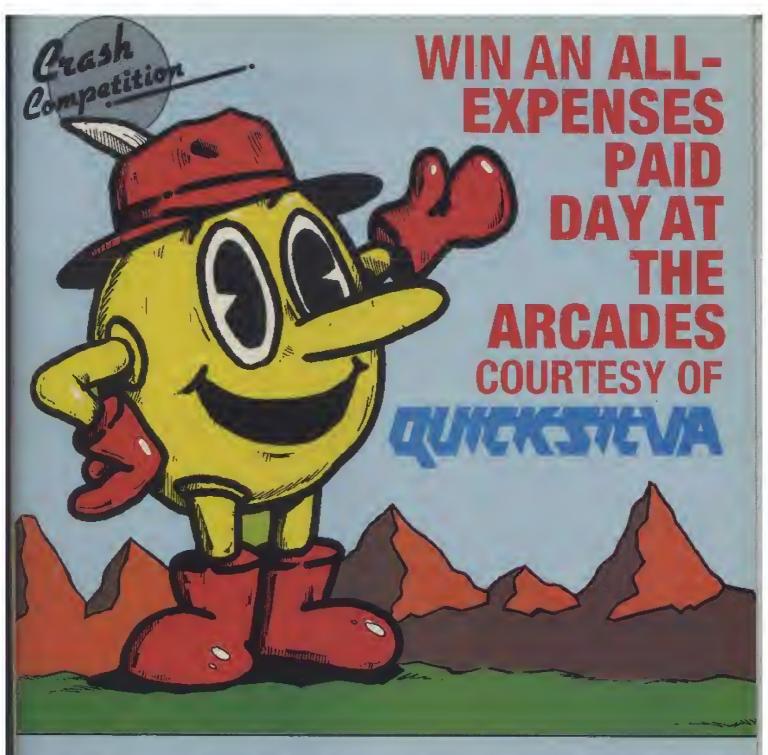
ENLIGHTENMENT

SINCE THE DRUID'S LAST VICTORY, ACAMANTOR HAS RETURNED TO BELORN, DEMON PRINCES RULE THE LAND, AND ZOMBIE'S ARE THEIR LEGIONS; WAITING FOR BATTLE.

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'PAC'S BACK', they say - yes, Pacman is rolling back to the Spectrum thanks to Quicksilva and the coin-op conversion Pac-Land, if you're the kind of person who spends all his waking hours (and a few of the others) in the

arcades, you'll be more than familiar with the rotund yellow hero -- and you'll also be happy to hear that Guicksilva is providing the readles for a brilliant coin-gobbling day at the arcades.
The winner of this comp will be

whisked to London for the day, all expenses paid, and plonked in a top arcade with a bagful of 10p pieces – 250 worth! And for ten runners-up there

are jaunty red Pac-Land briefcases colourfully decorated



with Pacman and his friends,

Just complete the famous arcade titles in the word grld which make up the name of Pacman's new escapade on Quicksitva. These clues should help . . .

- Fingertip athletics Much ado about an 2 Englishman's home
- 3 The glass house inhabited by Bentley
 4 Sequel to the racing game which was in front at the start 5 The follow-up to a gripping

- racing game Son of a jackass gorilla Two-way scrolling protection

Put your answers on a postcard or the back of a sealed red briefcase and send them to PACING 'EM IN COMP, CRASH, PO Box 10, Ludiow, Shropshire SY8 108 to arrive by February 1 1988.

GAMES OF THE BOOK

ROBIN CANDY concludes the saga of our favourite marketing tool - the contrived tie-in

OOK TIE-INS have, not surprisingly, led mostly to adventures, which recreate the book's atmosphere of textual intricacy just as arcade games can seem like fast-moving films. Probably the most famous tie-in

ever, and one of the first great games to emerge on the Spectrum, was *The Hobbit*, based on JRR Tolkien's tale of dragons, elves and dwarfs. The game followed the short novel's story line very closely and careful reading of the book could get the player out of most sticky situations

The Hobbit (which appeared the year before CRASH and so was never reviewed) was revolutionary. in two areas, graphics and interaction, in 1983 most adventures were text-only, so though *The Hobbit*'s graphics weren't revolutionary in themselves, there was a novelty in putting graphics to a quality game. After The Hobbit, the big chain

stores insisted that any game they stocked had graphics, and though the text purists complained that this resulted in a poorer game, graphics undoubtedly increased

And The Hobbit features complex character-interaction through a parser system developed by its programmer. Philip Mitchell, called Inglish, the like of which had never been seen on the Spectrum. The player can communicate with the other characters using the SAY TO command, though most of the

time ail it results in is Thorin sitting down and singing about gold . . . Later Tolkien's great follow-on from The Hobbit, The Lord Of The Rings, became two games which sum up many of the problems of book tie-ins (see below).

SNOWMEN AND SLEUTHS

Quicksilva's *The Snowman* (78% Overall in Issue 3) – one of its last releases before being bought by Argus Press – was based on the book of the same name by Raymond Briggs. The book relied on gentle cartoons without words

as did the film adaptation – to
convey the delightful story of a
snowmen who comes to life for one chilly night. Beyond its graphic similarities, however, the game doesn't have much to do with the original tale, so though it's fun as a tie-in it is irrelevant.

H G Wells wrote The Shape Of Things To Come, but his prophecies did not include a

computer game of another of his books: War Of The Worlds (46% Issue 7), released by CRL, adheres to Jeff Wayne's famous musical rendition rather than Wells's original text. Clues can be gleaned from knowledge of the album with the odd musical clue provided in the game. The first few graphics are atmospheric and beautifully drawn (for the time), but the game is a poorly-presented adventure with frustrating sudden death its main thrill. Considered as a tie-in, though, War Of The Worlds is one of the most relevant and basing the game on the best-selling musical score rather than the original novel was a sensible

Sheriock (8/10 Issue 9), written for Melbourne House by the same programmers as The Hobbit, isn't based on any specific book by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle but rather on the superslauth's character, it had taken many months to program and because of that and The Hobbit's success, expectations

Hobbit's success, expectations were high.

Like The Hobbit, Sherlock is rife with bugs but nevertheless presents an excellent adventure centred on a murder which Holmes and trusty Watson must solve before Inspector Lestrade makes a goof-up of the case and convicts an innocent bystander. The SAY TO command – better used than in The Hobbit – is necessary to solve the mystery. And having played the game at length, Ifind it particularly close to length, I find it particularly close to its original source in atmosphere and characterisation - it's also

diendishly difficult to complete.

Daniel Defce's Robinson

Crusoe of 1719 – one of the
earliest novels – must be the oldest subject of a tie-in, but Automata's adventure version (5/ 10 issue 10) is distant from the original. It's a gentle satire, with Crusoe stranded on 'a remote Island in Yorkshire' and trying to get home to sue his travel agent!

WONKERS AND ASSASSINS

Hill MacGibbon's adaptation of Roald Dahl's lable novel Charlie And The Chocolate Factory (63% Issue 19) centres on the five winners of the competition set up by Mr Wonker. Each of the winners allowed to visit the chocolate factory as well as receiving a lifetime's supply of chocolate, but there is a sinister motive

It's divided into five subgames: in the first four Charlie rescues one of the other characters, while on

the final screen the object is to collect golden keys and gain access to the Glass Lift. Charlie And The Chocolate Factory relates only vaguely to the book and film, and the licence is little more than a way to sall an unsulfate.

way to sell an unsalisfying game. In the same month, August 1985, Century Hutchinson released the game based on Frederick Forsyth's bestseller The Fourth Protocol. It's an adventure and probably because of that and, probably because of that, follows the book's plot quite closely. John Preston, an MI5 investigator, is trying to foil a trailor's plan to destabilise Britain and bring about the break-up of NATO by smuggling a nuclear device into Britain and detonating it on an American airbase.

The ensuing disaster would be blamed on America, and the consequent election of a hard-left Government would ensure departure from NATO. The Fourth Protocol (9/10 Issue 19) is played through use of windows, icons and built-down manus. pull-down menus - it was the first adventure to successfully use WIMPs in such detail, it's an exciting game and a sensible tie-in which keeps closely to the spirit of the original, though reading the book gives away no major clues.

RATS AND MOLES

Two issues later, Derek Brewste reviewed another adventure – The Rats (70% Issue 21) by Hodder And Stoughton (a rare excursion into computer-gaming by a book publisher, like Century Hutchinson's with The Fourth

Hutchinson's with The Fourth Protocol, based on James Herbert's grim horror novel about maddenedratstaking over Britain. The game roughly follows the book's story line and gives options to choose from when input is required. The object is simple enough—annihilate the rats and save mankind—but it's a tricky game to play, and documentation is poor, leaving a lot of points unclear. Still, it makes a good tie-in: the text descriptions have the same gory feeling as the book and generate e frightening etmosphere while maintaining the impression that time is of the essence.

Level 9 and Mosaic teamed up

Level 9 and Mosaic teamed up to let loose The Secret Diary Of Adrian Mole on an suspecting public, It was reviewed twice. Derek Brewster giving it 9/10 as an adventure, the CRASH team 86%, both in Issue 23 – a curious departure from the normal reatment of reviews which possibly reflected an equally odd departure from style for Level 9. Instead of being in Level 9's

usual text-and-graphics adventure format, The Secret Diary Of Adrian Mole is more a decision-taking game (not unlike The Rats) where the player chooses an action from several options and the game then proceeds accordingly. It follows Sue Townsend's humorous mock diary of adolescent tribulations closely enough with new twists added to familiar problems. decision-taking game (not unlike

Knowledge of the book is helpful

Knowledge of the book is helpful but doesn't make the game substantially easier.

Virgin snapped up the licence for The Growing Pains Of Adrian Mole (88% Issue 39), Townsend's sequet, but if was programmed once again by Level 9 and plays in the same style as the first game. It follows the book closely, so knowing it is certainly an asset, but The Growing Pains Of Adrian Mole isn't really very hard to solve. Level 9 managed to provide some of the book's gently, realistically satinc mood, but, as Derek Brewster pointed out in CRASH, Townsend's original is much funnier.

THE LORD OF THE RINGS

In March 1986 Melbourne House released the licensed version of The Lord Of The Rings (9/10 Issue 26). It's worth looking at this in some detail, because it sums up the problems confronting any tie-

Following on from The Habbit, J R R Tolkien's epic trilogy tells the tale of four habbits and their quest to destroy the one ruling ring of evil Sauron. The book is divided of evil Sauron. The book is divided into three equally massive parts, but the game – itself split into two parts – only follows the plot of the first book (The Fellowship Of The Ring) from the departure of the hobbits from Bag End to the breaking up of the fellowship. Problems to be overcome include gettling over Sarn Ford and

problems to be overcome include getting over Sarn Ford and escaping from the Barrow Wights. You can play any one of the four hobbits at any time, while the computer controls the others. Though this widens the scope of interaction it also makes the game painfully slow to play. In the end I found it best to choose Frodo and leave the computer to control the

others.

And what could have been a very atmospheric program is spoiled by the odd inaccuracy. For example, EXAMINEing the notice board in Bag End shows that there are some photographs pinned to it at a time when cameras haven it even been thought off it is a simple mistake, but one that detracts from the adventure's credibility. I suppose it would have been hard to adapt such a complextate in a way that would please everyone. Programmers asked to convert well-known books to

convert well-known books to games face a similar predicament to that of film directors—they have to decide what to leave out, and how to portray the characters. When someone reeds a book they build up their own conception of a character's personality and the importance of events.
That's why countless attempts to adapt The Lord Of The Rings to

the big screen as a live-action film have come to naught (and Bakshi's dubious cartoon rendition doesn't count). The programmers of The Lord Of the Rings game were doorned from

the start in the same way; it was impossible to represent all the scenes of the books without scenes of the books without turning the game into a rerun of the text and making it too easy to play, but leaving out certain parts and altering others seems like sacrilege to die-hard lans of Toklen's work.

As an adventure The Lord Of The Rings is (despite the many bugs) an excellent game, but as a representation of the book it necessarily leaves a lot to be

In June 1987 Melbourne House, now under the wing of Mastertronic, released Shadows Of Mordor (93% Issue 41), the

Both The Lord Of The Rings and The Hobbit have been parodied, though oddly the later game was done first. Delta 4's Bored Of Trie Rings (7.5/10 Issue 18) was based on the short Harvard Lampoon book which mocked Tolkien's grandiose mythology, and the same programmers did The Boggit (90% Issue 32) for CRL

TIGERS AND MR MEN

Gremlin Graphics's Way Of The Tiger (93% issue 28) was not adapted from a particular book but



How do you put three fat novels and an imaginary world into 48K?



Answer: forget the story, but keep the flerce atmosphere of Tolklen's fantasy in Shadows Of Mordor

second game in the Lord Of The Rings series, it centres on the adventures of Sam and Frago in The Two Towers, the second volume of the long trilogy, leaving out the separate goings-on of the other hobbits,

In gameplay it's similar to The Lord of The Rings, but the player can control only two hobbits — Samor Frodo or both. Thorin (from The Hobbit) is resurrected in the form of Smeagot. It's a relief that he doesn't continually sit down and sing about gold, but instead Smeagol is continually sneaking off into the bushes.

Shadows Of Mordor is as slow

as its predecessor and presents an unfldy face. Still, as an adventure it's highly complex and very enjoyable, though keeping to the atmosphere of Middle Earth rather than Tolkien's story line.

based on the Fighting Fantasy series written by Jamie Thomson (ex-Features Editor of White Dwarf magazine) and Mark Smith, All the books portray the player as a ninja warrior in a series of martial-arts adventures.

Keeping this in mind, the game could be said to be a fair representation of the books, but when it comes down to it Way Of The Tiger is a pure and simple beat-'em-up split into three levels. (The first features hand-to-hand combat, the second pole fighting and the third swordplay.)

And it's one of the best beat-'em-ups ever, with detailed graphics and smooth animation (the only letdown is the annoying multiload system) -- but as a Fighting Fantasy tie-in it's

In Issue 30 the eponymous hero

of Biggles (63%), star of numerous boys' adventure books and one recent – though heavily delayed – movie, finally kept his appointment with a Spectrum. The Mirrorsoft game follows the film's plot very closely, and so only just scrapes into this section of book tie-ins – but the intropid pilot of Empire is far better remembered as hero of Captain W E Johns's many books than for the insight

It's divided into several separate games based on film sequences, rather like Domark's game of the James Bond film The Living Daylights. But this mishmash of

subgames spoils the atmosphere.
With First Steps With The Mr
Men and Word Games With The
Mr Men, Mirrorsoft didn't even
attempt to follow story lines. Using
the characters drawn by Roger Hargreaves, whose names (Mr Greedy, Mr Happy, Mr Grumpy, Mr Strong etc) reflect their caricatured behaviour, the programmers created two educational games for children aged four to eight years. A case of a popular name being put to good

apopular name being put to good purpose. The first program is a shape-and letter-recognition game; the second is concerned with teaching children to read. Rosetta McLeod reviewed both, and concluded that they were of a reasonable standard, though probably suitable for children volunger than Mirms soft proposed. youngerthan Mirrorsoft proposed.

A BEAR, A BARE MAN, AND BARELY A MAN

Rupert Bear was given two Spectrum outings: Rupert And The Toymaker's Party (54% Issue 22) and Rupert And The Ice Castle (50% Issue 32), both from Argus, but the first on the QuicksIIva label and the second from Bug-Byte. Neither is wonderful – though to be fair, they are designed to appeal to younger children – largely because both suffer from blandness and little relevance to the inanely gentle. Bupert of the comic strips.

Markech took a swing across the Quicksliva label and the second

Martech took a swing across the jungle with Tarzan (73% Issue 36), the character who made Edgar Rice Burroughs famous. The story has Tarzan rescuing Jane from Usanga, chief of the Warnabo. The action is viewed from the side - a jungle full of victous panthers, lethal quicksand and natives who aren't too keen on Tarzan's intrusion - with monochromatic graphics, beautifully-detailed but à bit repetitive.

There was some ambiguity in the CRASH review, one comment stating 'Tarzan is very slightly based on the film'. But there have been many Tarzan films, the most recent being *Greystoke*. The Legend Of Tarzan, Lord Of The Apes, It's probably the closest to Rice Burroughs's original story, but the Martech game bears no resemblance to it. The reviewer was probably referring to the TV series starring Ron Ely which featured Tarzan running around a lot rescuing Jane, Ji, Cheetah, missionaries and anyons else who needed help - and, apart from the name, they bore even less resemblance to the Rice Burroughs stories!

Spectrum tie-Ins are not the only

guilty ones . . The last major book tie-in (though probably most associated it with films rather than with Bram Stoker's little-read novel) was CRU's **Dracula** (89%) Issue 37), which Derek Brewster found 'well-written and a good read'. Rod Pike's controversial adaptation got a 15 certificate from the British Board Of Film Censors, just as CRL's Jack The Ripper (reviewed this issue – a celebrity tie-in?) is rated 18

CELEBRITIES

YING IN a celebrity is essentially done to get an endorsement from the famous person for your product, even though the game involved may be called anything (or be about almost anything); but there can little doubt that Ocean would have sold far less copies of Daley Thompson's Decatholog (82%). Inompson's Decamion (82% issue 10) if they had called it, say, Sports Special, it was the first endorsed game of any note, and it was something of a coup for Ocean to have secured the favour of Thompson when he was at the height of his farme so soon after the Observier.

Olympics.

Daley Thompson's Decathlon
followed a spate of releases that were firmly based on the arcade hit Track And Field, and typically it's played by furiously waggling the joystick to achieve maximum joystick to achieve maximum speed. It's a niggling point, I know, but as a tie-in the game on the Spectrum faited by making the playing character white, when, as we all know, Daley is quite black.

Exactly a year later Ocean followed up the hit with Daley

Thompson's Supertest (76% (ssue 22) - but it looked like mortis celebritis had set in. The sequel features eight events, all of which had appeared elsewhere, and none of which has anything to do with Datey Thompson. While most events are well-presented, the unendorsed Hypersports is the better sports game.

SNOOKER AND SQUASH

Pool and snooker had always been popular subjects for the Spectrum, and following the success of two earlier computer versions of pool CDS released Steve Davis Snooker (77% Issue 12) in time for Christinas '84. The Steve Davis connection is really pure endorsement – the game doesn't have anything to do with Davis other than the obvious snooker link, though CDS managed to drag the star to The PCW Show to be seen playing it on an Amstract And It's participly the an Amstrad. And it's certainly the snooker game to surpass all

Novelty is all-important, especially with sports simulations, so New Generation was lucky to happen on one sport which hadn't been played to death by the software houses - and as far as I know the personality tie-in Jonah Barrington's Squash (87% issue 17) is the only game that deals with the high-speed sport. Viewed from behind the back wall of the court, the game keeps faithfully to the rules of squash and, just as in the sport, it's hard to get the feel of things. Jonah Barrington not only lent his name to the game but also his voice—it can be heard calling out the scores (with a little amplification).

FISHING AND FALDO

Some sports naturally lend themselves to the computer, but perhaps the oddest is Alligata's Jack Charlton's Match Fishing (74% issue 18 – 'rating from a fisherpersen's viewpoint', said CRASH) which, frankly, didn't. The great Charlton is apparently a mad-keen angler, but the game has nothing to do with him other than the endorsement and not a lot with fishing either. Its one noteworthy aspect is that up to eight can play, all waiting for a randomised fish to appear – in silence, with sandwiches and raincoats, presumably.

raincoats, presumably.

After Track And Field and snooker/pool, golf has ever been a Spectrum software favourite, so it was inevitable that after Daley Thompson and Steve Davis a golfing star would get the treatment. Nick Faldo kindly obliged by lending his name to a simulation by Argus Press Software. Nick Faldo Plays The Open overcomes many problems encountered in earlier golfing games through the use of icons. Selecting clubs, for Instance, always a pain before, is made quick and simple. It was the best golfing simulation of its time, surpassed now, perhaps, by Leader Board.

FOUR STRONG MEN

Sports games were all the rage during Christmas '85 and Martech, not be left out, released *Geoff Capes Strongman* (78% Issue 24). It features six events typically found in The Strongest Man in The World competitions in which Geoff Capes regularly takes part, Icons were also all the rage then, and here they are used to control the strength levels of individual muscles—but even this innovative approach fails to elevate the game above other sports simulations.

above other sports simulations.

Sports-celebrity endorsement continued with Graham Gooch's Test Cricket (65% Issue 25) from Audiogenic. There are two ways to play it: simulation and arcade modes. In the former you make tactical decisions rather than actually control the movements of the players, in the arcade game you control batting and bowling. It was the best cricket simulation at the time, but its lukewarm reception didn't say much for its predecessors,

A spate of boxing simulations ended when Activision topped out with Barry McGuigan World Championship Boxing (88% Championship) Championship C

taken seriously if you want to become world champ.

Brian Clough's Football Fortunes (42% issue 38) combines computer with board game. The computer performs calculations while players move round the board. Like Addictive's famous Football Manager it is a game of strategy, borrowing from Clough's career. No-one was Impressed with the use of the computer as surrogate dice, and the game is a boring management simulation.

FRANKIE WENT TO OCEAN

Most real-life celebrities in computer games are sports stars, but there are a few interesting exceptions.

It is August 1985 and Frankie say: "Welcome to the Pleasuregame", and set the software world ablaze with talk of icons and windows. A pop groups isn't the most obvious subject to base a game on, especially a group notorious for its provocative, not say blatantly sexual, behaviour. But Denton Designs was commissioned by Ocean to write a game to fit their unusual licence. The programmers' only brief was that Ocean didn't want a game with Frankies running around in it.

The result, Frankle Goes To Hollywood, was one of the best games of 1985 (94% Issue 19). Denton Designs blended ideas from its previous hits Giff From The Gods and Shadowfire to introduce a new concept in games design. As a tie-in the game wasn't based on any particular member of the group but rather on elements from the music and the images projected by record company ZTT.

You control the impressionist figure of the Frankie 'Equation', living a humdrum existence in Everydays-Ville... except nothing is quite as it seems within the shadow of the Pleasuredome. Magic is everywhere... inside the TV, at the back of the refrigerator, and who really knows what secrets the back of a sofa holds? By collecting pleasure points and becoming a well-formed character Frankie can enter the very centre of the Pleasuredome and Maximum Joyl

Frankie Goes To Hollywood is divided into subgames which are in some way connected to the Frankie ethos. For instance, one scene features Reagan and Chemenko fighting it out – the theme of the Two Tribes video. If nothing else, Frankie Goes To Hollywood proves just how rich a tie-in can be in the hands of programmers with fertile imaginations. Through a synthesis of arcade and adventure elements Denton Designs created one of the most enjoyable and imaginative games ever.

THE BEATLES AND SAM FOX

Frankie Goes To Hollywood wasn't the only group featured in a game – inevitably, the Beatles eventually popped up. In Beatle Quest (7/10 Issue 27), marketed appropriately enough by Number 9, you don't actually play any of the Beatles but rather a futuristic observer who must return objects to specified places. It features lyrics officially endorsed by the fab four, and the adventure manages to create a Sixtes atmosphere. But the product only reatly appealed to those wanting a trip down Memory Lane (and probably Penny Lane too).

The appeal of Sam Fox Strip Poker (72% Issue 28) isn't exactly

The appeal of Sam Fox Strip
Poker (72% Issue 28) isn't exactly
universal either, and the Martech
game caused some mixed feelings
in the CRASH office. The
endorsement of Sam's body is
gradually revealed as she sheds
her clothes in blurry digitised
pictures. If you play the game just
for the picture it works out a lot
easier (and cheaper) to pop round
the newsagent's and buy The Sun.
Still, behind the endorsement is a
very good poker game — and the
pixelated pin-up is about to strike
again with the imaginalivelynamed Sam Fox Strip Poker II.
We'll see whether programming
advances match advances in what
a dirl can reveal.

A MIXED BAG

Arguably it's a book tie-in, but Virgin Games's How To Be A Complete Bastard (73% Issue 45) drew its, uh, inspiration from the eponymous Adrian Edmondson's gross-out humour in general as well as his Virgin book. The player gate-crashes a yuppie party and earns points by being as obnoxious and malodorous as possible; the CRASH reviewers felt right at home with ft.

Finally, there've been a few odd appearances by celebrities in games. Spectrum inventor Sir Clive Sinclair was reduced to a hapiess sprite in Scorpio Gamesworld's obscure C5 Clive (65% Issue 17) – the player guides Sir Clive through the streets in the unsuccessful electric vehicle he invented in real life!

Amonth earlier in 1985, the hero of British Industry had been sluck without a C5 in Micromega's A Day in The Life (59% Issue 15), where the object is to get Sir Clive through hazard-filled London to be knighted by the Queso.

knighted by the Queen.
And the Queen? There's no tiein we know of ('your task is to keep
up the victorious, happy and
glorious levels, shown by an
indicator at the top of the screen'),
but Prince Charles did appear as a
robot in Ocean's Head Over Heels.
CRASH was quite amused.

CARTOONS

ANGERMOUSEgot his own game, Dangermouse (in Double Trouble) (75% Issue 10), from Creative Sparks. As in the cartoon series Dangermouse is up against his old adversary Baron Greenback, who has created an android Dangermouse to help his plans for world domination. Creative

Sparks managed to achieve considerable likeness to the cartoon characters, and the wacky scenes fit well the atmosphere of the original series. Naturally, the game's best suited to younger players.

The mouse returned in Dangermouse In Making Whoopee (56% Issue 32) on the Sparkiers label together with Baron Greenback. Again the graphics resemble those of the cartoon series, but this time the limp gameplay falls to capture any of the TV series's atmosphere.

MAD MAD WORLD

Not so the first *Spy Vs Spy* (93% Issue 19) from Beyond, it more than lives up to the anarchic antics of the crazy spies Black and White from *MAD* magazine, who spend their entire cartoon lives laying wild plots to do each other down.

It's set in an office building, where the spies compete against each other and the clock to recover a set of top secret plans and escape in an aircreft. The game features 'Simulvision', a split-acreen technique allowing two players to see what each other is up to. In visual presentation, actions such as the laying of spytraps and the chuckling when one spy obliterates the other, Spy Vs. Spy sticks close to its source and is one of the better comic tie-ins.

It's a pity the same can't be said of its sequel Spy Vs Spy, The Island Caper (53% Issue 41) by Databyte. Here the spies are stranded on an Island where they search for the parts of a secret missile. It was line on the Commodora 64 but was converted dreadfully. Bad programming and a poor choice of colours ruins a game with potential.

POPEYE AND ROLAND RAT

The spinach-swallowing sailor Popeye was featured in a game of the same name by Don Priestley for Dk'Tronics (90% Issue 20), later rereleased by Piranha. The screen area looks like a scene from the cartoon strip, with large and colourful graphics that somehow manage to avoid the worst of attribute problems. The game features elements from the cartoon series and is a successful tie-in not so much to any story but to the characters themselves.

to the characters themselves.

Roland's Rat Race (66% Issue 20), programmed by Denton Designs for Ocean -- one of the team's less notable games -- is a sort of double tie-in. Not only is there the egregious cartoon/puppetrodent, but there's also the plot, which sends Flotand on a mission to rescue his friends and still have time to reach the TV AM sturlies.

studios.

But Roland's Rat Race was a big letdown; colour clashes confuse the eye, it lacks gameplay and purpose, and has little connection with Roland Rat.

PEOPLE WHO LIVE IN ROCK HOUSES

BC's Quest For Tyres (46% Issue

23) was licensed by Software Projects from the widely-syndicated comic strip BC. You play the part of Thor who has to rescue Cute Chick from the Hungry Dinosaur. It's a poor conversion of a poor Commodore 64 game, and suitably comic-strip graphics fail to recreate the original's slapstick humour.

Indeed, most tie-ins with humorous cartoons have been disappointing, perhaps because the comedy of cartoons is based on hapless characters getting into disastrous situations rather than a player getting them out againt

Quickslive had a go with TV's The Flintstones in Yabba Dabba Doof(81% Issue 26). Playing Fred Flintstone, you build yourself a snug cave in order to woo Wilma and live happlity ever after. The graphics manage to recreate the cartoon's prehistoric atmosphere (and helped its high rating), but the game's humour suffers in comparison with the TV series.

SCOOBY DOO – BEST CARTOON TIE-IN?

After a long wait and several scrapped versions, *Secoby Doo* (91% Issue 33) finally made his debut on the Spectrum, released by Elite and programmed by Gargoyle Games, It's probably the best Spectrum reallsation of a cartoon character.

The canine hero makes a daring rescue mission into the castle where his friends are held captive. Nasties inhabit each level and can be sent to another dimension when Scooby socks it to 'ern with a punch. The graphics are as good as those of the TV series, and so it's both a great game and a good tission.

Gaul Asterix made his games debut thanks (or no thanks) to Melbourne House in Asterix And The Magic Cauldron (61% Issue 34). The diminutive Asterix and his huge but stupid sidekick Obelix are out to recover seven pieces of a magic cauldron so that a strength-giving elixir can be brewed and their village kept safe from marauding Romans. The graphics are fair representations of the cartoon books but the programmers forgot to insert a dame.

There was quite a long gap before someone else tried out a cartoon character, and then it was US Gold with *Road Runner* (73% Issue 43), a tle-in with the arcade game and the elderly charna cartoon series. It's not a bad representation of either, but colour clash on the Spectrum make the cartoon-quality graphics ugly. And there's not much gameplay.

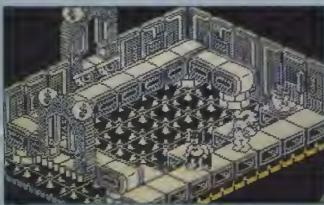
INTELLIGENT ANI-MALS

Just last month, two more cartoon animals hit the Spectrum screen from TV and film respectively.

Though it's aimed at a young market, Pirantia's Yogi Bear (62% Issue 47) is harder than the average reviewer could manage; you control the furry hero in a simple 3-D arcade version of Jellystone park as he searches for food and fellow bear Boo Boo. The difficulty is the biggest drawback.

difficulty is the biggest drawback.
Gremlin Graphics's Basil The
Great Mouse Detective (73%
Issue 47), also intended for young
players, is much easier, with good
graphics derived from the Walt
Disney movie.

Tintin and Snowy may be next on the list of cartoon tie-ins - the licence to the daring boy



Goean's Baiman: dramatic style from Jon Ritman and Bernie Drummond

Having established a nice comic style of graphics in *Popeye*, Don Priestley put them to even better usefor Piranhe in *Trap Door* (88% Issue 33). The game, starring Blu-Tack Berk, sticks faithfully to the TV series in graphics and style. The sequel, *Through The Trap Door* (70% Issue 47) is every bit as playable, but offers nothing significantly new and, like its predecessor, can get a bit monetonous.

GOOD GRAFFIX

The ever popular Roman-kicking

adventurer of Hergé's books and his absurdly intelligent white dog is now up for grabs, as CRASH exclusively reported earlier this year.

COMICS

OR YEARS American
adventure programmer
Scott Adams had been
renowned for the quality of his
games, but as they were written
with disk access and far more than

48K in mind, Spectrum-owners had to content themselves with reading about them till Adventure International began some conversions.

And Adventure International was therefore one of the first companies to release a tie-in with a popular comic-strip hero. The Hulk (8/10 Issue 8) formed the first part of the Guestprobe series which would feature various Marvel comic-book characters. The garne doesn't follow any particular comic or TV programme's script, but stays rather with the atmosphere created in the comics.

Controlling Bruce Banner, you are to recover some valuable gems, but many of the problems encountered require assistance from your after ego. The Hulk, Derek Brewster said it was good but became repetitive on successive plays. The Hulk's greatest strength lias in the large, colourful comic-style graphics.

Spider-Man (8/10 Issue 14) was

Spider-Man (8/10 Issue 14) was the second in the Guestprobe series from Adventure International. The object is similar to that of The Hulk; collect all the gems and overcome your foes in the process. Scott Adams created an adventure that didn't need to rely on the reflected glory of its source, for Spider-Man is excellent as a game. It captures the attributes of the arachnoid hero perfectly, and again the superb comic-style graphics enhance the textual imagery.

DIY ZOIDS

The programmers of Electronic Pencil Company made a name for themselves with Century Hutchinson's The Fourth Protocol (see the section on book tie-ins), and Zoids (96% Issue 25) for Martech only improved their standing. The scenario follows the eternal battle between the malevolent Red Zoids and the heroic Biue Zolds as described in brochures and comic strips given away with the mechanical self-assembly toys.

assembly toys.
It could have been an awful licence, but Electronic Pencil Company capitalised on the toys' do-it-yourself element and the strategy/adventure notions of *The Fourth Protocol* accessed through icons and windows representing a mind-merge with the electronic brain of the Zoid you control, creating an original game of high quality that uses its tie-in source as a sensible departure point.

FROM BATTLEZONE TO BATMAN

Mikro-Gen tried its hand at a comic-strip (and TV-series) tie-in with Battle Of The Planets (7 1% issue 26). The cartoon series pits five members of G-Force against Zoltar and the forces of Spectre. The game's scenario based on this notion, but bears absolutely no resemblance to the TV series, looking more like a version of Battlezone or Elite.

An issue later, Ocean released Transformers (60%), diving into the continuing battle between the autobots and the deceptions with alicence that nobly tied up with its source series in scenario style and some of the animations – but provided a poor game.

provided a poor game.

But then Ocean promptly made up for it by releasing Jon Ritman and Bernie Drummond's Batman (\$3% issue 28) with the caped crusader making a timely entrance in dramatic style. When Boy Wonder Robin is kidnapped, it's a fine time to discover the Batmobile in pieces. You explore the Batmobile find and assemble the Batmobile's parts or Robin Is done for

Batman is derivative of other 3-Disometric games but manages to improve on the formula by including many special effects. The connection with Batman, however, lies only in the graphic character of the hero, and even so there aren't any of Batman's traditional foes to overcome.

2000AD

2000AD characters ought to be ideal for computer games, but they haven't fared at all well (yet) – Strontium Dog (42% Issue 13) from Quicksilva isa confusing and tedlous example, and Nemesis The Wartock (61% Issue 40), refeased by Martech, though blessed with suitable graphics, lacks excitement.

blessed with suitable graphics, lacks excitement.

Piranha's Rogue Trooper (79% issue 36), though programmed by Design Design, hardly helped. The game – his unit betrayed and systematically wiped out, Rogue Trooper embarks on a mission to recover the vital evidence needed to convict the traitor – is far too

easy to get through.

But Piranha did much better than Melbourne House did with another 2000AD character. As the hero of Judge Dredd (42% Issue 38), you go through the futuristic city capturing – or eliminating – unfortunate perps. The graphics are well-drawn but spoiled by a host of attribute problems, and the game itself is extremely boring –a great licence opportunity rulined by poor implementation.

by poor implementation.

There's another 2000AD licence reviewed this issue – Martech's strange Sláine, on page 161 – and there was a feature on the comic's tie-ins last issue.

FAILURE OF THE UNIVERSE

US Gold's Masters Of The Universe (28% Issue 38) must be one of the most abysmat tie-ins ever. Controlling an ill-defined He-Man you enter Castle Greyskull, rescue Orko the Wizard and overthrow evil Skeletor.

Presentation and gameplay are simply appalling.

simply appalling.
And then there's Challenge Of The Gobots (37% Issue 43) from Reaktor, yet another dreadful tie-In. Controlling Leader-1 you embark on a dangerous mission to rescue your friends. Whatever one might have imagined the game could look like, no-ene could have been prepared for something faintly reminiscent of the ancient Commodore 64 hit Sheep in Space, Poor content, poor programming and steep price resulted in an extremely disappointing product.







and delighted cries of 'I've reached Level Two' have been floating around the CRASH

floating around the CRASH office ever since.

Daniel Fielding of Plymouth,
Adam Cundy of Sherburn-InElmet, Dominic Kearney of Tocting, Kwekura Lee of Neath, Kevin
Tuck of Bristol, Stephen Pettit of
Maidstone, Matthew Safe of Prestbury, James Alcock and Robin
Alcock of Northampton, and last
but not least Marce! Bowen of
Cleobury Mortimer (within
delighted-crying distance of
Ludlow) are all contestants in
this month's "What's the code?"
And the result is unanimous—
they all agree that the code

they all agree that the code

897653

FREDDY

That eponymous hero Freddy Hardesthas charmed dozens of tipsters into doing their stuff —

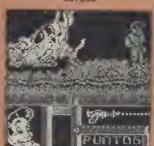




Figure 19 Figure

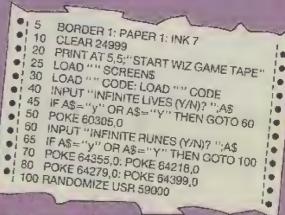
Third raid FANG is a hitsticky and strake to slopes, which is vary useful for the centre hexagon and for the bottom left and top right group ones. However, he becomes uncontrollable on additions even if they are is, it is not vary wise to lake him to levels with add if them

BALL isn't as good a croid as FANG and HOVER buthe san do anywhere if he smitkilled from the

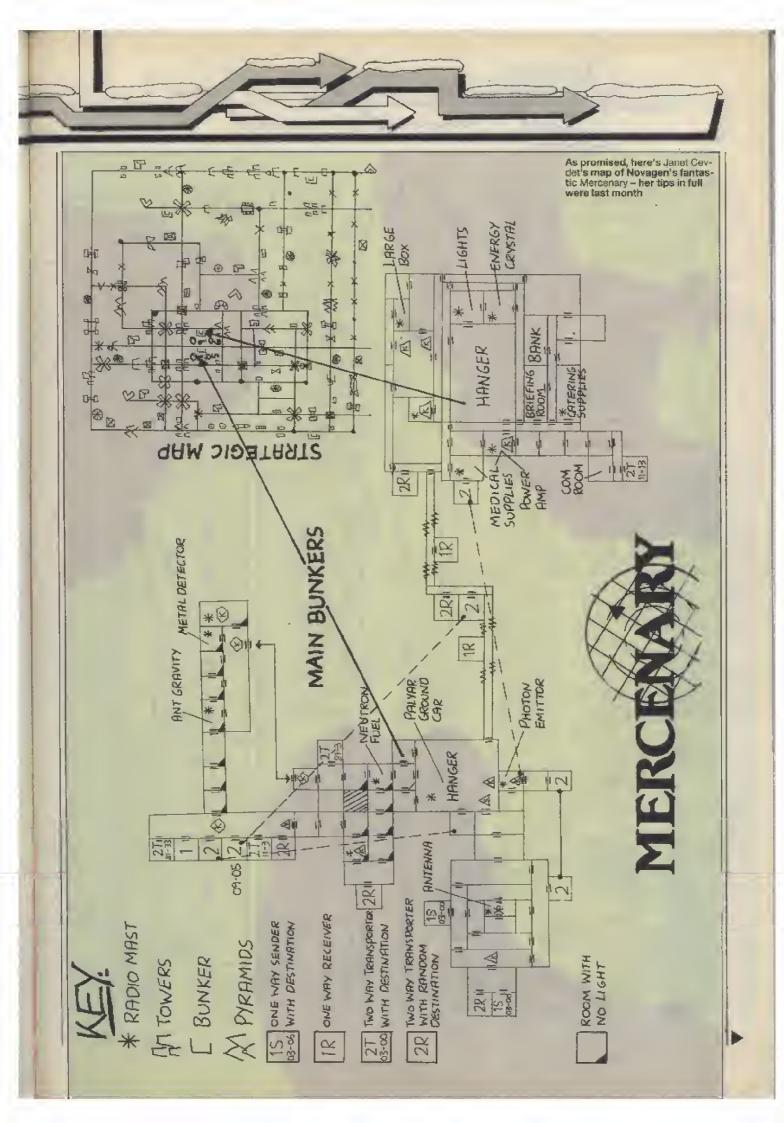
Possible.
The bonus is a critical part of Rac L.E.D. An extra bonus lefter is awarded every 19,000 points for left on part one, and only one is given be the bonus latter appears and get out tassoon as I appears and get out for the next one.

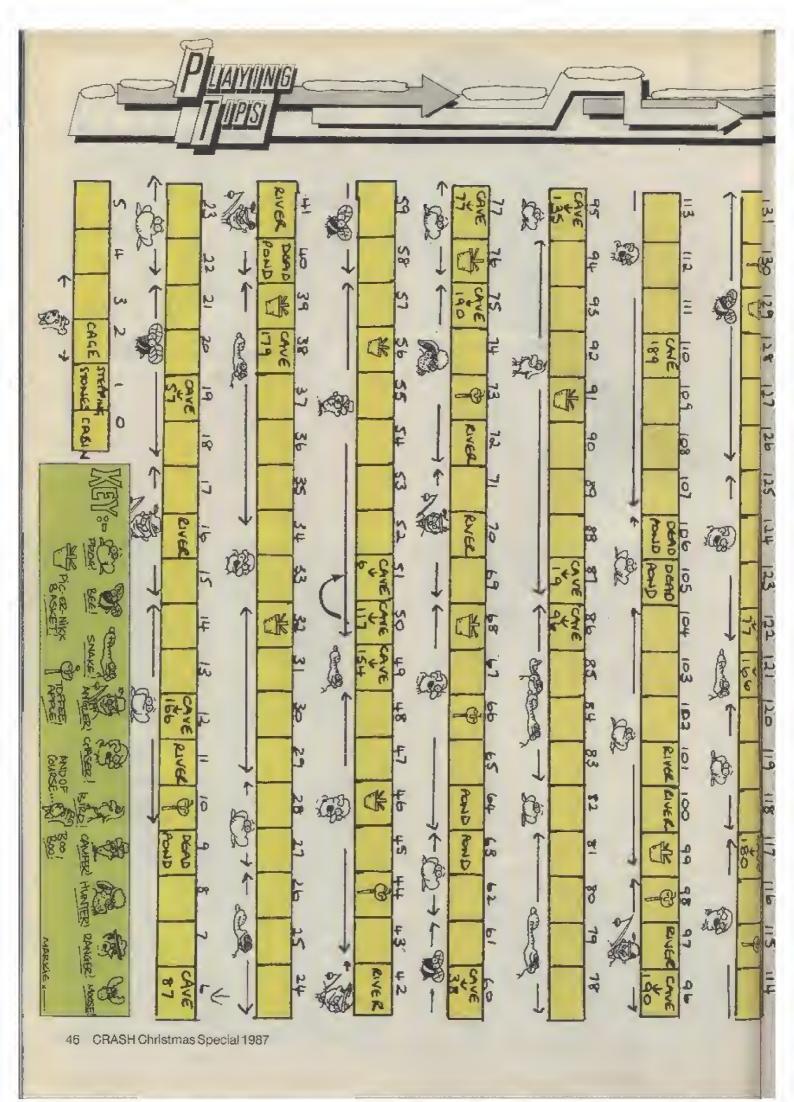
WIZ - DON'T L

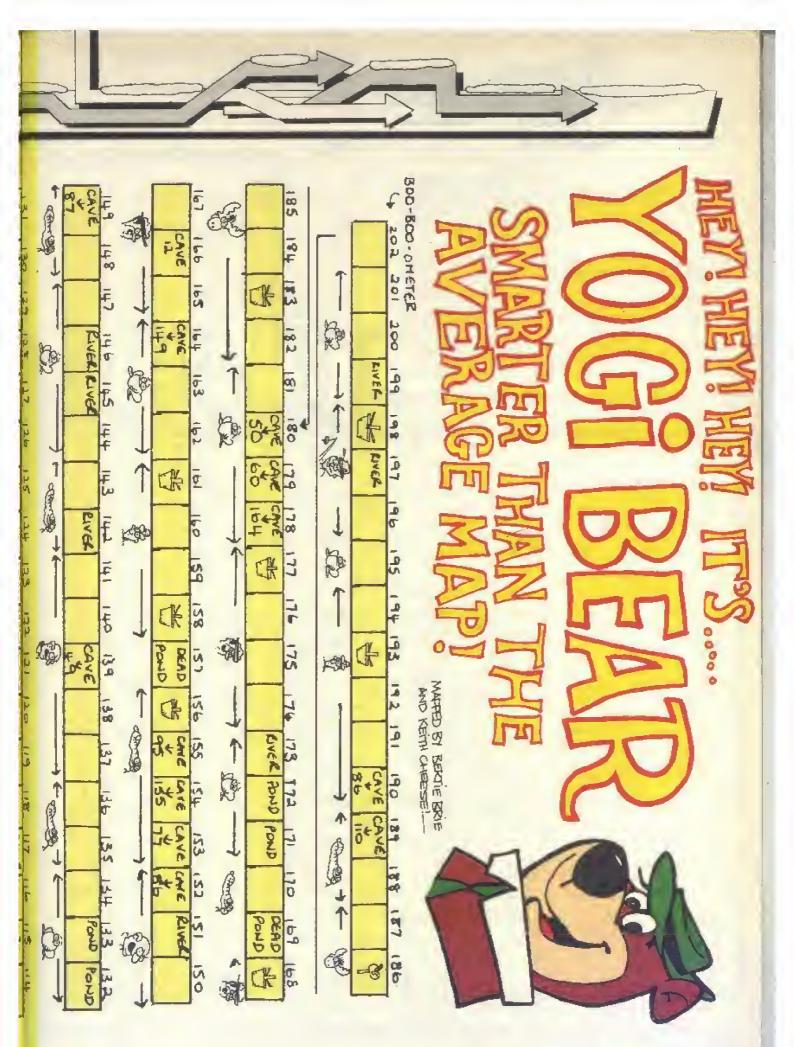
Melbourne House's highly colourful Wiz wasn't liked much by the reviewers in Issue 42, but for those of you did go out and buy it here's a short POKE routine for infinite lives and runes, it's from Martin Spraggett of Coventry.













Tai-Pan has been a megafavourite lately – I've never seen so many maps and tips for one game. And when the Tai-Pan file finally burst this special was born...

Tips: lan Meadows of Hornehureh Maps and price lists: Stephen Lang and Chris Lang of North-ampton (who win £30 worth of software as Cartographers Of The Month)

PLAYING TAIPS

To make money easily . . . go to the warehouse and buy a box of tea and sell it back (you'll lose money, but don't worry); then go the the armoury and buy some musket shot and cannon shot; then go back to the warehouse

and buy some more tea. If you sell the tea back to the warehouse they'll pay up to four times as much as it cost you, and if you keep on doing this you will become a mighty trader or 'tai-pan' – the object of the game.

KEY TO PRICE RANGES

TEA SYMBOL **BUYING PRICE RANGE (000s of \$)**

ABC

JADE SYMBOL.

BUYING PRICE RANGE (000s of \$)

64-66 ABCD 71-74 78-80 85-87

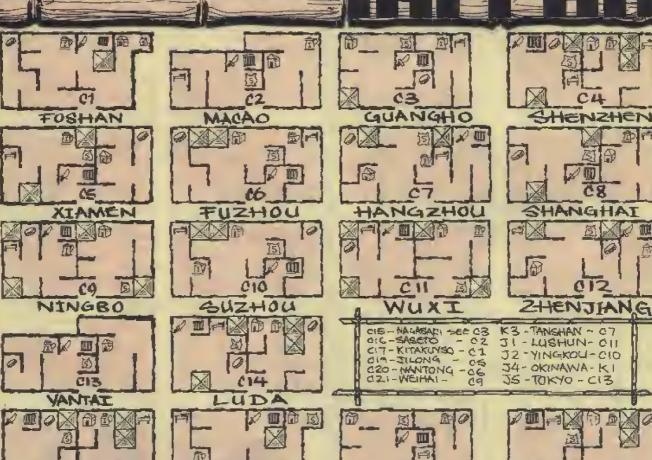
SILK SYMBOL

BUYING PRICE RANGE (000s of \$)

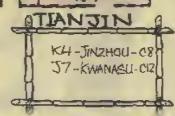
36-39 39-42 BC 42-45

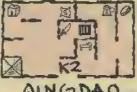
Note: the buying price is \$2,000 higher than the selling price.















FT-REST

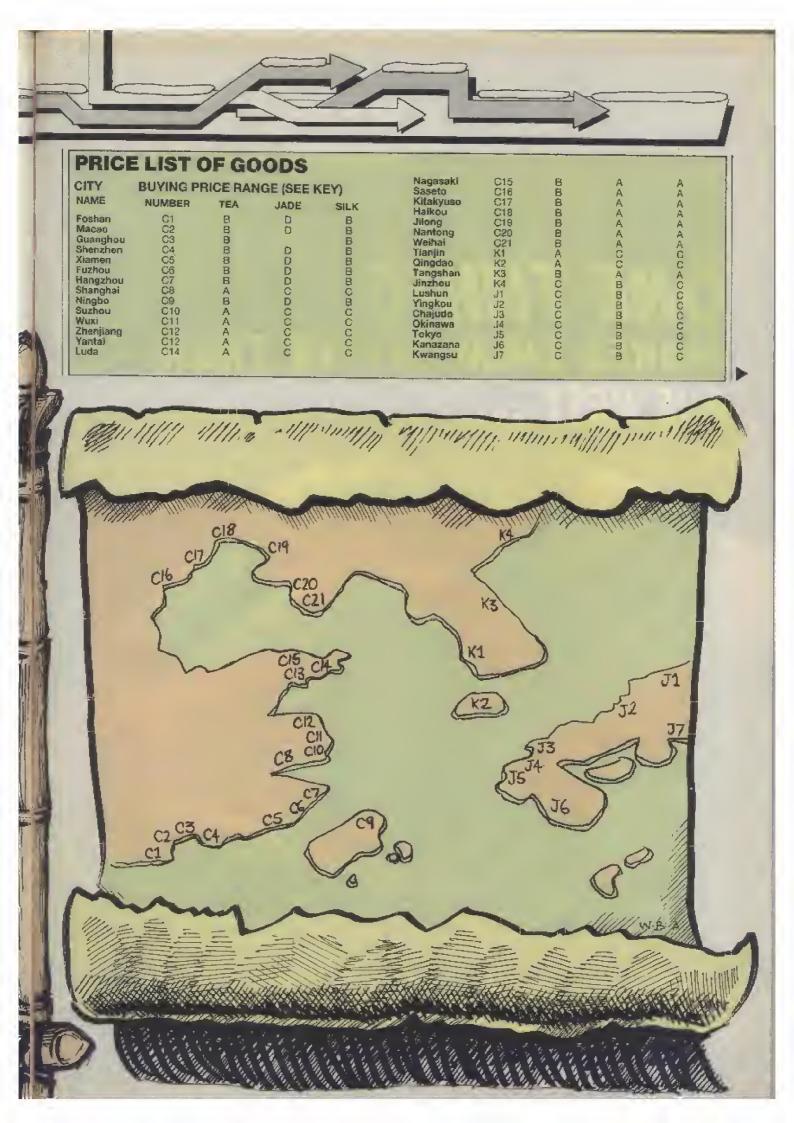
CHAJUDO

@-BANK

- WARTHOUSE IIII - GAOL

SUPPLIES

STEPHEN AND CHRIS LANG

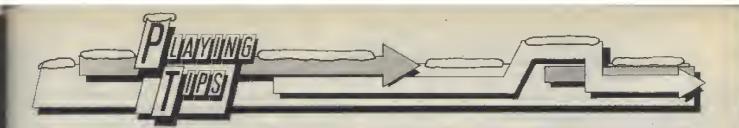


GUILL STORES

ONE THING MAKES THEM BETTER THAN THE REST....



SPECTRAVIDEO LTD. 165 Gärth Rügd, Mörden Stirrey SM4 4LH, England Terephone 01-390 6103 1 nes



TTACK OF THE HOWDON HACKERS

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reaggghh! The Howdon Hackers don't seem to know the meaning ATV SIMULATOR

I fair play they've given me so many POKEs for new games that

In just spoiled for choice.

But here are their three Agent X II POKEs, an XTV Simulator routine

In the long-awaited Batty POKE.

AGENT X II

- ·110 REM AGENT X II - PART 1 120 REM HOWDON HACKERS '87 • 30 REM
- •,40 CLEAR 24639
- 50 LOAD "" CODE 24640
- 60 FOR F=23296 TO 23316 170 READ A: POKE F.A: NEXT F
- 80 DATA 62,14,50,201,96,62
- 90 DATA 91,50,202,96,195,168 100 DATA 96.0,175,50,176,225
- 1110 DATA 195,162,98
- 120 RANDOMIZE USR 23296
 - 10 REM AGENT X II PART 2 • 20 REM HOWDON HACKERS '87 .
 - 30 REM •
 - 40 CLEAR 24639
- . 50 LOAD "" CODE 24640 60 FOR F=23296 TO 23316
- 70 READ A: POKE F,A: NEXT F
- 80 DATA 62,14,50,201,96,62,91 • 90 DATA 50,202,96,195,168
- 100 DATA 96,0,175,50,35,244 • 110 DATA 195,162,98
- 120 RANDOMIZE USR 23296
- 110 REM AGENT X II PART 3 PART 3

 REM HOWDON HACKERS '87 • 130 REM
- 40 CLEAR 24639
- 50 LOAD "" CODE 24640 • 60 FOR F=23296 TO 23319
- 170 READ A: POKE F,A: NEXT F BO DATA 62,14,50,201,96,62
- 90 DATA 91,50,202,96,195,168
- 100 DATA 96,0,175,50,129,197 110 DATA 50,226,195,195,162,98
- 120 RANDOMIZE USR 23296

(HO!HO! PHEN!

- •15 REM ATV HACK ·16 REM HOWDON HACKERS '87 ·! 10 CLEAR 25400: LETT=0 •120
- LOAD "" CODE •,30
- FOR F=23296 TO 23339 · 140
- READ A: LET T=T+A: POKE F,A · 50 NEXTE
- 60 IFT<>4761 THEN PRINT "ERROR":

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ie. . .

- 70 DATA 221,33,0,64,17,0 180 DATA 27,55,62,255,205,86 190 DATA 5,221,33,56,99,17
- 100 DATA 64, 156,55,62,255,205
- 110 DATA 86,5,175,50,90,235 • 120 DATA 62,30,50,186,223,50
- •,130 DATA 187,223,195,176,214 •1140 DATA 127,72,72
- •, 150 RANDOMIZE USR 23296

BATTY

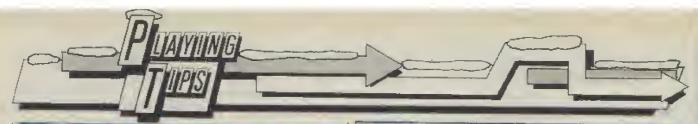
110 REM BATTY HACK 120 REM HOWDON HACKERS '87 150 LOAD "CODE • 60 POKE 65522,250 ●170 FOR F=64000 TO 64012 î e . 80 READ A: POKE F.A: NEXT F . 90 DATA 62,228,50,51,189,62 . 100 DATA 2,50,52,189,195,0,104 1. 110 RANDOMIZE USR 64753

CHEAT MODE

(PLEASE LEAVE *SOLOMON'S KEY* AT THE DESK) (WE PROVIDE *EXOLON* SERVICE)

Go to the define keys option and type in EBORP: You will then hear

That works the same way as the Exclonichest Lloyd printed in Issue 45 — speaking of which, it was wrong! Here's Thistle's cheat in full and correct;



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INFINITE BATTY LIVES

The industrious Hackers have fitted in just a bit of hacking while working on a revolutionary 100%-hackproof protection system! This month they've got a routine to give you infinite lives in Elite's Batty.

- 10 REM BATTY POKES
- 20 REM INDUSTRIOUS HACKERS
- 30 REM C. SMITH, J. BEAN, D. AUSTIN
- 40 REM CRASH '87
- 50 CLEAR 24576 0
 - 60 RESTORE

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- 70 PAPER 0: INK 0: BORDER 0: CLS 80 LOAD "" CODE 64753 .
- 90 POKE 65522,252
- 100 FOR F=64512 TO 64518 •
 - 110 READ A: POKE F,A: NEXT F
 - 120 RANDOMIZE USR 64753
 - 130 DATA 237,67,57,189
 - 140 DATA 195,0,104,0

HOW TO GET COMPLETELY POKED

Many POKEs have arrived for Virgin Games's How To Be A Complex Bastard – here's one routine from Kevin Southern that caught my eye.

- REM HOW TO BE A COMPLETE
- BASTARD
 - REM BY KEVIN SOUTHERN
- 4 **CLEAR 49151**
- 5 LET T=0: LET W=0 10
- FOR F=47872 TO 48011
- 15 READ A: POKE F,A
- LET T=T+A+W: LET W=W+1 20
- 30 **NEXT F**
- IFT<>1012808 THEN PRINT "ERROR IN 35 DATA": STOP
- PRINT AT 10,0;"START HOW TO BE A 40 COMPLETE BASTARD TAPE"
- LOAD ""CODE
- 50 RANDOMIZE USR 47872
- 100 DATA 221,33,122,187,6,6,197
- 110 DATA 221,110,0,221,102,1
- 120 DATA 221,78,2,6,0,17,0,125
- 130 DATA 237,176,235,54,201,30
- 140 DATA 150,205,0,125,221,35
- 150 DATA 221,35,221,35,193,16
- 160 DATA 222,33,103,238,17,0
- 170 DATA 252,1,0,4,237,176,175 180 DATA 50,115,255,33,80,187
- 190 DATA 17,23,255.1,3,0,2,37
- 200 DATA 176,33,83,187,17,100
- 210 DATA 95,1,50,0,237,176
- 220 DATA 195,244,254,205,100
- 230 DATA 95,62,195,50,76,255
- 240 DATA 33,112,95,34,77,255
- 250 DATA 201,253,33,58,92,62
- 260 DATA 62,50,22,135,33,10
- 270 DATA 50,34,23,135,33,230
- 280 DATA 177,34,25,135,49,0
- 290 DATA 96, 195, 0, 95, 196, 228
- 300 DATA 16,212,228,24,18,229
- 310 DATA 12,30,229,14,44,229
- 320 DATA 25,80,229,11

Electric Dreams's car-racing game from Issue 48 has caused quite a commotion in the tips department. Perhaps someone wrote a POKE and everybody else copied it, or perhaps everybody wrote all their POKES exactly the same! Anyway, the one-that came out of the hat first was a routine from The Fat Boys (sounds a bit like my brother's makes). brother's mates)

- REM SUPERSPRINT POKE
- 2 REM (C) THE FAT BOYS '87
- 5 **CLEAR 32767**
- PRINT AT 10,3;"START SUPERSPRINT 10
- LOAD ""CODE e,
 - POKE 65108,194: POKE 65092,37 12 13
 - FOR F=65400 TO 65413 14
 - READ A: POKE F,A: NEXT F 15
 - DATA 62,201,50,206,192,195,
 - 0,154,205,64,154,195,44,255 RANDOMIZE USR 65408

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Right, it's time to surrender all those dangerous passwords that can get you to higher and more dangerous levels of Mastertronic's Agent X II (one of the most popular games for tipping at the moment). The offending

parties are Mat Crawley of Shef-field, James Alcock and Robin Alcock of Northampton (you've been in this column once aireadyll, Marc Johnson of Heme Bay and David Rayment of North

.

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Type in the two passwords exactly as printed!

STAGE ONE: no password

STAGE TWO: HERE COME OL'

FLAT TOP. STAGE THREE: THERE'S NO ESCAPING IT

NICK ROBERTS PLAYING TIPS CRASH PO BOX 10 LUDLOW SHROPSHIRE SYS 1DB



Homework for the holidays - reviews of Spectrum educational software covering chemistry, German, information processing and physics, plus learning by bitter experience in a stock-exchange simulation.

The next CRASH Course will be in Issue 50, on sale February 25.



THERE SEEMS to be a growing

school.

The Vision Software programs don't use graphics, nor do they make much use of colour, but they are very gard as serious study aids to be used as reinforcement for specific coursework.

CHEMISTRY

Unit One - Nature Of Matter

Producer: Vision Software Retail price: £11.40

Vision has four packages covering the chemistry syllabus. The first one, entitled Nature Of Matter, starts off by quizzing the user on his knowledge of apparatus. A definition appears on the screen-for example, needed for some purity tests!— and two clues are provided if wrong answers are given. This section also includes tests on separation techniques.

The course then proceeds to deal with atomic structure, particles, the periodic table and electronic configuration, acids

by Rosetta McLeod

and bases, salt preparation and identification, pH values and ion tests, and reactions. There is also a guide to accompany the package with tables of chemical data.

The other three packages in the chemistry series cover energy and reaction equilibria, nonmetals, air, and water, and metals and carbon. Though Viscon markets these packages as being for the 11-to-16 age range, the science units are more sultable for older pupils taking GCSE and 16+ courses—there are only a few topics in the chemistry units with the easy Congrading.

INFORMATION PROCESSING

Unit Two - Software And Business Systems

Producer:Vision Software Retail price:£10.95

Following on from Unit One, Hardware And Techniques, this package aims to introduce the student to the topics of text-management, ousiness support

systems and data/information systems; including word processing. Complete with quizzes, the package also deals with issues such as security of information, privacy and the social implications of exploiting this technology.

HISTORY

Unit Four – Social (Industry And Transport)

Producer: Vision Software Retail price: £10,95

Vision Software's history programs cover five topics: The American West, Medicine (The Early Years), Medicine (Flocant Developments), Social (Work Trade And Society) and this one, Social (Industry And Transport). As with all the history packages, this two tapes.

The first deals with the Industrial Revolution and transport before 1850. The tridustrial Revolution of transport or the production of transport social and inventors.

Transport before 1850 is covered by question sets on road, rail, canar and steamships, and the second tape deals with industrial development and transport since 1850.

Multiple-choice questions are used in the sections on road transport and communications in general, and there's a quiz on the British press.

This package should be used only for short periods at a time, because there's lots of information to absorb.

GERMAN

Unit Two – Accommodation And Meeting People

Producer: Vision Software
Retail price: £10.95

If you've got through Unit One of

Vision Software's German course, you're ready to tackle the two themes of Unit Two meeting people and arranging

accomodation. It offers games based on a town plan found in the user's guide.

The section called Meeting Rendle deals with conversational phrases and general information, and introduces the user to a letter in German, it then goes on to deal with writing letters to book accomodation in campailes, notels and youth hostels. The final section provides useful practice on German verbs, covering verious tenses as well as



impersonal and separable verbs.
The package contains a keyboard strip for producing the characters in the German alphabet not found on the English keyboard,
This is a comprehensive and

Interesting suite of programs which would be a useful revision aid for examination purposes, as well as helping the holiday-maker brush up on his long-forgotten school German!

PHYSICS

Unit One – Forces And Motion

Producer: Vision Software Retail price: £10.95

The first of four physics units from Vision Softwars, this package covers pressure and density, forces, motion and the motor car. As with all the company's educational packages, a variety of questioning techniques is used—when attudying density, for example, the user is asked to indicate with a yes/no response whether he agrees with a number of statements such as 'The volume of a sample of material equals its density divided by its mass'.

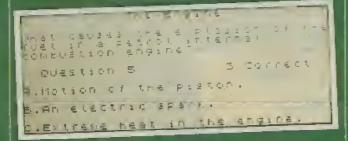
When the correct response ('no') is given, the computer explains that volume equals mass divided by density. But if a question is answered wrongly, four possible answers are put on the screen, and the student tries to choose the correct one. The lirst of four physics units from

The section on pressure and density ands with a test on Hooke's Law, mass and weight, and the differences between them. In forces, the most difficult question set is on the principles of moments, while the sasiest option covers Archimedes' principle.

The final unit is on the motor car, and divides its subject into the engine, the electrical system, the fuel system, the transmission system and auxiliary systems. The accompanying booklet has tables and figures for specific topics, as well as a list of abbreviations.

Vision Software's three other units on physics cover energy and matter, sound and optios, and together the four packages provide a comprehensive revision course,

Examining force and motion in Vision Software's Physics



WRITE ON

Producer: System Software 12 Gallegiate Grescent, She — d

12 Calleglate Crescent, Sheli i d S10 25A Reteil price; £9:14 Age range: 4 years to secondary remedial

Write On is designed to develop skills of basic ineracy by encouraging children to write. For very young children who are just beginning to learn to distinguish words, the program also assists in the development of a sight vocabulary.

As soon as Write On is loaded, the first of nine pages is displayed. This page contains 17 common words, tagether with some letters and the functions available, and

it is the home page to which the program returns after completing most operations.

All of Write On is controlled by just two keys, from which the child can select those words he requires to form sentences which are displayed on the screen. By moving the cursor to the chosen box, the child can access a range of words grouped in aphabetical order, and if the word he wants isn't there it can easily be added to the word set.

This personal word set is a particularly useful feature, as up to 240 different words can be built up and saived to tape; thus the learning can be focused on the shild's own interests and needs.



Stockmarket from CCS: lose pounds without pain

STOCKMARKET

Producer: Cases Computer Simulations, 14 Langton Way Landon SE3:7TL Retail price: £5:95

Age range: older students/adults

It may seem like a computer nasty in the attermath of the other great CRASH, but this program (from CCS, well-icrown for its strategy wargames as well as for educational software) should have a wide appeal in the age of privatisation and simal investors. The aim of the game is to maximise the value of your investments by buying and salling shares in up to six companies. There are three levels of difficulty, you can borrow money to the value of your assets in the easier two options, but if you are supremely confident you borrow only half the amount.

The computer can provide you with basic facts about a company, such as its share prices and

stability record. And other information is designed to mayou feel jittery — for example, a general election might be called. At the end of five 'days', a statement is presented. Brokers' face and — it all gains tax have to computer also gives you a rating based on your performance, and will comment on the tactics you've employed!

employed!

But if you do badly, remember
it's only a game and you won't
have to sell the Porache.

COMMENTS

Keyboard play: very respons le to the single-key commands Graphics: four information graphs, limited colour

General rating: an interesting insight into the volatile dealings of the stock market

The accompanying booklet advises that if the program is being used with a very young child you should start off with a blank word set, and enter the words suggested by the child. Older pupils can have their attention drawn to capital fetters and simple punctuation.

Up to a screen of double-space text can be written at a time, and it can then be saved or pointed. Written by an educational psychologist specialising in the davelopment of reading skills. Write On is an extremely useful resource which allows for flexible use according to the needs of the child. With encouragement from an adult, children can develop their filteracy skills, freed from the frustration which often results.

from poorly developed coordination or poor handwriting. Games paddles and joysticks can also be used with Write On, making it suitable for the physically handleapped teo:

COMMENTS

Keyboard play: good, Option of using games paddies and joysticks.

Graphics: no graphics, and limited use of colour

General rating: though White On lakes a little getting used to, the effort is worthwhile. Highly recommended as a flexible aid to developing literacy skills.

Write On from System Software; a flexible aid to literacy





CK THE RIPPER

Producer: CRL Retail price: £8.95 Authors: St Brides

Imost a century ago, Jack The Ripper roamed the dark streets of London's East End for four terror-filled months in 1988. At least seven murders of prostitutes have been attributed to the killer (or killers) unknown, and the gas lamps didn't make anyone feel any safer; Jack might be afoot that night, and British razors have

always been of good quality. CRL and the 'lady' programmers of St Brides, known for their Victorian attire, have chosen to 'commemorate' these events with the first computer game to receive an 18 certificate from the British Soard Of Film Classification, it follows in the horror tradition of the same software house's *Dracula* and Commodore 64 Frankenstein, 15 both given (St Brides's certificates. previous include the rather milder 1985 adventure The Snow Queen.)

This scrolling script of Victorian terror was written using Gilsoft's Professional Adventure Writer system, and the mock-19thcentury text is complemented by graphics screens showing the more unpleasant aspects of the human anatomy when a cutting edge bites deep.

Circumstance leads you to become prime suspect in the police's hunt for London's most wanted man. On waking the next morning you discover that your

PAUL

"What a gruesome subject ~ I'm not a wimpo, but I can see why it's got an 18 certificate. The graphics aren't really that scary, but the text creates a terrifying atmosphere. Practically, it's annoying to have to go all the way through the long, time-consuming opening sequence each time you play. But once you get into the meat of the game you have to be really clever, trying to fool everyone as to who you are. Jack The Ripper is repetitive, but there's plenty of atmosphere and it's interesting enough to appeal to nonspecialists."

house is watched by the police. To prove your innocence you must escape from the confines of your small abode and follow the pathway of clues that can prove your innocence.

carry, white LOOK brings up a description of your surroundings.

But whatever Instructions you might use, don't forget that time is preclous. The London bobbies are out to get you.

BYM

" Unlike so many adventures, Jack The Ripper has a wide variety of options, locations and vocabulary available from the start. The language used is clear enough without the very flashy graphics, and it's extremely easy to follow what's going on. "

72%



Jack The Ripper: more blood than guts in a very simple but infamously gruesome scenario

ROBIN I

"Jack The Ripper is a reasonable introduction to the world of adventuring. But there's in fact very little to do; your course of action is clearly mapped from beginning to end. True, there's some atmosphere when something nasty happens, but it wears off rather quickly. Perhaps the best point is the extensive yocabulary, which allows the novice adverturer to communicate with the computer with hearth, and something." with the computer with hardly any trouble.

The window seems the only means of escape, but climbing out of a window when there are police close by might make you look a little suspicious perhaps some kind of disguise could be the

Commands can be given in fullsentence form, or using conventional abbreviations such ventional abbreviations such W instead of GO.WEST; adverbs allows you to accomplish adverbs allows you tracks slowly or carefully. Commands can be given to other with the SAYTO characters with the SAY TO instruction. The INVENTORY command lists everything that you

COMMENTS

Graphics: small gory pictures Sound: there's an ocarina to play in the first room General rating: an unsophisticated adventure with lots of witty writing and a much-discussed bloodiness

Presentation	73%
Graphics	47%
Playability	67%
Addictive qualities	72%
OVERALL	72%

REVIEWING ADVENTURES

This issue is Derck Brewster's last as Adventure Trail columnist - the programmer/writer is leaving CRASH to set up a software house and won't have time to breathe, let alone LOOK AROUND.

Starting next issue, adventure enthusiasts from the regular CRASH reviewing team will be covering each month's major releases in Adventure Trail – and the tips and letters sections, Signstumps and Signpost, will continue too. (The addresses remain unchanged.) So will Superheroes, annouging the first people to complete new adventures.

But CRL's Jack The Ripper is, we decided, a special case. Its notoriety and 18 certificate are bound to attract many nonadventurers, so it's treated here as an ordinary game.



PAW PIE

Dear Derek Having read your favourable review of Gilsoft's PAW, I must ay that I agree wholeheartedly with your comments. I have discovered several tips which I feel will be of interest to your readers. The first two involve the implementation of two sophisticated commands used in the best adventures - AGAIN (repeat last command), and OOPS (back one move).

This is hinted at in the manual. Here is how to actually achieve it. Insert OOPS as a synonym of RAMLOAD (verb 29) and delete RAMSAVE. Then insert the following entries into the process table:

* * 0 E2 33 29 Is verb RAMLOAD/OOPS RAMLOAD 255 (see 1 below) Restore posn DESC Redescribe (new) loca

* * 1 RAMSAVE Save posn Notes

1 To limit the power of OOPS with regard to certain commands, you may wish to keep certain flags. It, for example flag 30, the score, is to be preserved replace RAMLOAD 255 with COPY FF 30 255 RAMLOAD 254 COPY FF 255 30. You may also wish to reduce the score using MINUS 30 x.

2 It may alternatively be desirable to completely disable OOPS at certain times by setting a flag, say 100, and inserting in entry * * 0, as: E2 100 0 conduct at the start

Insert AGAIN (and desired synonyms) as a new verb number x. Use some storage flags (for convenience I have used 100 + number of flag whose value is to be stored). Then insert the following entries in the response table (which will come after the OOPS entries): 2 E233x

COPYFF 133 33 33 ≈ VERB **COPYFF 134 34**

34 = NOUN1

COPYFF 135 35 35 = ADJECTIVE1

COPYFF 136 36 Restore 36 = ADVERB **COPYFF 143 43** Command 43 =

PREPOSITION **COPYFF 144 44** (ie 15) $44 \Rightarrow NOLIN2$ **COPYFF 145 45**

45 = ADIECTIVE2

3 COPYFF 33 133 **COPYFF 34 134 COPYFF 35 135** COPYFF36136

Save Command (ie LS) **COPYFF 43 143**

COPYFF 44 144 COPYFF 45 145 NB The OOPS and AGAIN commands MUST be at the start of the table before the normal entries. This is why I have used the * * E2 33 ? technique rather than inserting straightforward OOPS - and AGAIN - entries.

Finally, a couple of brief tips I found helpful.

Sometimes it's desirable to see if an object can be picked up without actually trying to do it using AUTOG. The following routine does this and is best used as a new process table. It assumes the object in question is the current L5 noun (adjective), so if this is not true flags 34 and 35 will need to be set to the appropriate values. It SETS flag 200 if picking up is possible and CLEARS it, otherwise flags 198 and 199 are also used.

* * 0 CLEAR 200 set 200 to zero

WHATO set the object flags SAME 54 38 Is the object here? **COPYFF 37 199** Can the SUB 1 199 player hold one more object? WEIGHT 199

Can the player cope

ADD 55 199

with the extra weight? COPYFF 52 198 PLUS 198 1

SUB 199 198 GT 198 0 **SET 200**

successful, so set flag 200 to 255

* *1 DONE

return to calling table

Lalso found it useful to create a special 'rubbish bin' location in say, loc'n d. This is due to the inability of the program to differentiate between objects which have not been created, and objects which have been created but then a room 1 we find object 1, the pie, and that the pie, if carried, may be eaten. Then we use the following:

EAT PIE CARRIED 1 carrying pie MESSAGE 'It's tasty' message PLACE 1 d put it away DONE finished Now the obvious thing to do would have been to DESTROY 1. But then the following entry for SEARCH ROOM would have allowed us to discover yet another pie, after eating the first. However, since the pie is now in loc'n d, the routine will NOT allow another pie to be found.

SEARCH ROOMD AT 1

in room 1 ISAT 1 252 pie not yet found MESSAGE 'Found' message CREATE 1 DONE SEARCH ROOM 1 MESSAGE 'Nothing special' Else . . . DONE

Of course this could all be done with flags, but you only need one rubbish bin' to work for ALL such objects, and also you could make visiting the 'rubbish bin' part of the game (cf pirate's treasure chests in games such as Classic Adventure and Lords Of Time).

Paul Fulcher, Norfolk

THE TYPESETTERS' REVENGE?

Dear Derek Paul Stephenson does it again! After his amazing Lords Of Midnight POKE, I thought it would be impossible for him to better this, but in CRASH Issue 45 he even produced a Doomdark's Revenge POKE.

But, as usual, with the good news comes the bad, and the bad news is that the typesetters have done it again. Yes, the Lords Of Midnight POKE didn't work, and though I fixed it myself, the proper correction didn't appear till over a year later. Then, when

the Doomdark's Revenge POKE appeared, I typed it in hastily and, to my dismay, it didn't work. Then, in an effort to correct the

error myself. I found the checksum to be 10426, 1 more than it was supposed to be.

Now, if the program had been in decimal, I would have subtracted 1 from each of the numbers and found the answer by a process of trial and error, but the program was in Hex, and not being skilled in this, I couldn't find a correction to the error.

Normally, I would have waited for the correction, but after the enormous wait for a correction for the Lords Of Midnight POKE, I felt I needed to write to make sure of a correction.

Brian Neilson, Lanarkshire

(PART II)

I waited in anticipation for Doomdark's Revenge POKEs and you duly obliged in Issue 45, but as usual the POKE is littered with mistakes.

- 1 Line 50 The computer will not accept PRINT \$0
- 2 There are two lines numbered
- 3 You refer to line 691 (end marker) but there is no such line shown
- Three of us have triplechecked the data block but we still get 'ERROR IN THE 1ST DATA BLOCK'

G A Adams, Scarborough

AND HERE'S PAUL TO PUT US BACK ON THE RIGHT LINES . . .

Dear Derek

Thanks for printing my Doomdark's Revenge letter in Issue 45. However, those dreadful typesetting bugs must have been hard at work as there were six mistakes in the letter. The first and most important was in the data in line 508: an F was printed instead of an E. The line should have read **DATA B03£C3327**

080CD6980C9 Without this correction, on run-



DB

ning the program a checksum error will be thrown up, and if you ignore this the program will crash just after loading the screen.

The others were only small mistakes

On line 50 there should have been a hash (#) instead of the dollar sign after the PRINT keyword.

There were two lines numbered 682; of course the second line should have been numbered

683. There was a mix-up with line numbers in the second paragraph of my letter. It should have read: Leave out any lines between 600 and 683 you do not want, but you must include the end marker (line 6901.

Paul Stephenson, Leeds

UTILITARIAN

Dear Derek Of all the adventure utilities -CAC, PAW, The Quilletc - which do you recommend? I am hoping to write an adventure which I can put on the market. Is it better to be a freelancer for an already established software house (if so, which one?), or start your own homegrown software company? Ian Miller, London

Firstly, utilities - and I don't think it is revealing a secret to say that I think Gilsoft's PAW (Professional Adventure Writer) is the best utility available at the moment. Its nearest commercial rival is GAC (Graphic Adventure Creator, but games born of GAC tend to be a bit samey whereas PAW is more flexible and has superb vocabulary-handling routines.

You are quite right in the other part of your letter to observe the lack of utilities in the likes of WH Smith - the large high-street stores need look no further than their sales figures to see that utilities are a minority market (as are programming aids generally). So I would direct you to your local specialist computer store.

If you have no luck there, write direct to Gilsoft for the Profes-sional Adventure Writer and to Incentive for the Graphic Adventure Creator. The Gilsoft address is 2 Park Crescent, Barry, South Glamorgan — telephone Glamorgan – telephone (0446) 732765 – and Incentive is at 2 Minerva House, Calleva Park, Aldermaston, Berkshire RG7 4QW (telephone (07356) 77288).

As for writing adventures on a commercial basis, it's important to ask whether the adventure you might create will be commercial in other words, whether it will be sufficiently entertaining or different to warrant someone pur-chasing it? My advice is to find some people of similar abilities in your local area. A computer shop or the local

press might direct you towards a Computer club where you can mix with people of widely differing abilities and you can learn and have fun whether your attempts are up to commercial standards or not. The vast majority of professionals began as enthusiasts who happened upon some commercial ideas.

If you do find yourself becoming successful you might form a design team which supplies software houses, because in all honesty the computer-games market is now big business and it would take an awful lot of money to set up your own software house, producing your own cassette covers, duplicating your own tapes, advertising etc.

GAC COLOUR

Dear Derek When I first had GAC1 couldn't add colour to pictures without clash - but all you have to do is pick a paper colour from 1 to 7 but leave the ink colour on black. Then press the A key to fill the paper with the current colour. Now you can draw and shade just as with a black-and-white pic-

N D Fisher, Birmingham

WAKEY WAKEY

I have found a way of dealing with the input facility in Mastertronic's ZZZZ. To stop the computer butting in when you're try-ing to type simply connect an interface before loading the game up. I know it works with a Kempston interface.

And to delete a character without interfering with the icons simply press key 1 and voilà. Neil Blain, Cheshire

GREASED ZIP

In response to Bernard Parkinson's plea for help in CRASH Issue 44 concerning Ben Hanson's 'zippy routine', I have writ-ten an improved and working version of Ben's program, Just load the adventure of your choice and then the search program. If the adventure is not Quilled remove line 90. Then type RUN.

- 10 FOR I = 23296 TO 23334
- 20 READ A
- **POKE LA** 30
- 40 **NEXT I**
- 50 DATA 205,107,13,62,2,205,1,22,1,168,97
- 60 DATA 33,0,0,23766,229,197,63,10,0
- 70 DATA 254,31,56,5,254,127,48,1,215,193
- DATA 225,3,43,124,181,32,234,201 80
- POKE 23316,47: REM THIS LINE FOR

QUILLED GAMES ONLY 100 RANDOMIZE USR 23296

Joseph Lynass, Belfast





IOEL QUINN of London wants to know how to destroy the

When you encounter the trolls, wait till they have finished discussing you and then say Lux. This should turn them to pulty. (JOHN WILSON).

SPY TREK

Could you please find it in your heart to help a lady. No? Well, how about helping the other five! Yes, we total six humans, or thereabouts, and we are lotally stuck on Spy Trek (Americana). Nobody, but NOBODY, has heard of this game except us. We have reached the Eiffel Tower and know that the tramp (old man) has to be there, but he is proving elusive. After trying everything we can think of over six months we still can't get off this screen' writes L MORRIS of Hampshire.

At the airport examine tramp and read sign to learn how much you should give him. Proffer a pound coin seven times then get key. At the tower listen guide and unlock gate with the key from the tramp. Then, where else but up?! (JOHN WILSON)

WINTER WONDERLAND

LEONIE BURTON of London is having a bit of a winter of discontent inside while summer blazes without. 'The problem is I need the master key to enter the rooms that are locked. The master key is in the fover on a hook on a chain. I've tried every way to get the key but all that comes up is 'you pull the chain but it won't

Get vacuum cleaner. Go to the middle of the corridor and give the vacuum to the daily cleaner. She is most pleased as she had forgotten where she had left it and gives you some soap in return. Go to the foyer and press key into soap. Make your way to the locksmith. (STEVEN HOUSE)

GREMLINS CRAIG YOUNG is stuck with those pesky Gremlins.

Drill a hole in the metal plate over the vent. Cut the plastic pipe with the hacksaw and join the pipe from the gas bottle to the plastic pipe, Insert pipe into hole and open valve. Light torch and get out. Move E and W for a few moves and the store should blow up. Follow Stripe and Stripe falls into the empty swimming pool and is stunned. (D MOORE)



TERRORS OF TRANTOSS

BRIAN BENNET wonders how he can get across the turbulent river.

From the plateau, dam the river with PUSH BOULDERS. (JOHN WILSON)

LORD OF THE RINGS I think Melbourne House's The Lord of the Rings is the best computer game ever,' says CHRISTOPHER TREARTHA However, I am finding the going tough.

found some gems in Old Man Willow. Can you tell me how to get them out?

How do you cross the Brandywine using the ferry?

1 Go NE to Tom Bombadil's house. SAY TO TOM 'FOL-LOW ME', SW, BECOME MERRY, GET JEWELS, BECOME FRODO, SAY TO TOM 'HELP', NE. The jewels kill the riders by saying KILL RIOFR.

2 Follow Farmer Maggot's advice and use the ferry. Share burden by allowing the hobbits to take turns at turning the handle.

(Tips from DES DAVIES)

In Part Two STEPHEN BOND is lost in the mines of Moria.

From inside the doorway go U,E,E,E,D,D,W,D,S,D. You should now be in a corridor with astone door. Smash the door and go E and up. (DES DAVIES)

BEN VOKE inquires: 'Please give me the solution after you reach Merry's house."

At the grassy plain wait for Merry to arrive. This may take some time if you are only Frodo, so play two characters and move Merry yourself. As Merry collect the meal in his kouse and head W, N, to the Highway. Go W along the highway to Michel Delving and collect candle and read book. Now go back along the highway (Etwice) and N to reach the Oval Lake. Swimin lake. (DES DAVIES)

Game One, Part One, and PAUL TREGIDGO (this month's CRASH Challenger) can't get past the last bridge. He thinks he needs the elistones to do this but doesn't know where to get them,

Elfstones: swim in the Oval Lake and a strange person will appear and throw 2 elfstones at you. (DES DAVIES)

LORDS OF TIME

G MacFadyen has some questions on this Level 9 classic. 'In Zone 3, 'he asks, 'what do you do with the struggling cavewoman dragged by her hair?'
Give club to cavewoman.

In Zone 5, what do you give the dragon? Give food to dragon.

THE BIG SLEAZE

'How do I get the sliding door open? The HELP only gives you open **** with ****. I reckon the last word is CROWBAR', muses RICH HILLS.

Open grille with crowbar. The following answers to G M DOBBS's questions may appear enigmatic but I think you'll get the gist of what the questions were .

Wait for Ben at the apartment and examine sofa. No-one mentions the medicine cabinet! Sliding doors and secretary are red herrings. (B R BENNET)

SHADOWS OF MORDOR 1 have managed to get down the cliff only to be lost in the maze, and the branch I used as light keeps blowing out. How do I get Smeagol to help?' asks Charles Arnold.

Climb down the rope and you'll be in the swamp. Go E then S then SE. Tell Sam to give all to Frodo, then tell Sam to drop one of the logs. Go W,N,NW then SW. Tell Sam to drop the log, then do the same for the other 3 logs. Tie the rope to the logs and make a raft. (PAUL GODWIN)

MICHAEL PACEY can't get anywhere in the Dead Marshes. He's noticed that in the book Smeagol leads the hobbits through, but in the game Michael can't get the slimy beast to do anything. In the back of the instruction leaflet it mentions a 'promise' command but Michael can't find any way of using it.

Smeagol and yourself get off the raft into the Dead Marshes. Go E, then SE. If there is a black rider there just wait and it will go away. Smeagol will suggest you go E. Go E and you will be in a small valley with a muddy stream. Go SE, S, W, S, S, S. (PAUL GODWIN)

As for the 'promise' command, when the tied-up Smeagol asks for the rope to be taken off say 'no' and he will

offer to take you to Mordor. Say to Smeagol 'promise' Wait till he promises and then unlie his rope. (NEIL HARRISON)

COLIN STEWART from Mid Glamorgan is having a spot of bother navigating on the raft,

Get on the raft and push it S with the branch. Once you reach the other side say to Sam get off' and push the raft N with the branch, Say to Smeagol 'get on' and push it S (the raft can only carry two otherwise it sinks). Then follow the instructions Smeagol gives you. (NEIL HARRISOŇ)

'In Issue 44 you said that you dragged and cropped the logs and then made a raft with the rope. Where did you drag them to! I've gone everywhere and all get is Sam and his description. Also, when you use the word 'push' it says you cannot roll the raft, who wants to roll it?' writes NEIL MANSON.

Drag the logs to the swamps edge, Drop everything but the ring, drag the logs in turn. Go back for your possessions, tie the logs. The raft will not hold everyone at once. (P | FAIR-WEATHER) Make sure you have the rope. TAKE ALL and MAKE RAFT. (NEIL HARRISON)

I'm sure Gollum could be helpful but every time I speak to him he runs away screaming' (like Nick Roberts in the Challenge

Ed) – PAUL TREGIDGO Try to kill Smeagol and make him promise to behave. (PAUL GODWIN)

THE HELM

NEIL MANSON asks 'what do

You use for a blowpipe?'
TAKE DART and INSERT DART into hollow reed to form blowpipe.

VALKYRIE 17

CRAIG YOUNG is in the sewers with the rats and wishes they were all like Roland.

Go to the butchers and take a leg of lamb. When the butcher comes at you, give up your lead box. Go down the sewer and move N for four moves. Wear the aqualung, go N and through the gap in the wall. The rats will prefer the meat! (BILLY DINGWALL)

'How dot get the necklace to pay

for the bill? Can I get out of the hotel by the window?'-MICHAEL BULL.

Search, shake and examine everything. Tie sheets together and to the bed. Climb out of window. (BILLY DINGWALL)

MICHAEL BULL asks two questions: 'What is the fuse used for? How do you get the water to soak the compost?

Insert fuse into skimmer. Empty water onto compost, plant bulb in compost. (ANDREW HILL)

THE FOURTH PROTOCOL In the middle of the second game, The Bomb, I have exchanged the case for a tracer bug and receiver off Crick. But who to plant the bug on seems a mystery as everyone seems to be the good guys, 'says | NOR-MINGTON.

To bug one of the journalists you need to know which is an illegal. Buy a camera from Boots of Oxford Street and take a photo of them. Buy some flowers at the Barbican florists and take the flowers and camera to C. Return to Heathrow and use the bug in the Barbican. To get to the florist go W,N,S,E, buy the flowers. To

escape go N,N,N,E,E,E,S,N,S,N,W,W,E Buy a guide book from the shop and examine it. If you get lost, directions from landmarks to the florist are as follows:

Concert hall NNSE Theatre SWNSE Guard NNWNSE

Shop W E, then see guard

NEIL LOFTS is stuck: 'I am at a total loss with ZZZZ and would be very grateful if you would answer this little lot.

How do you avoid being nicked for jaywalking? (HELP tells you to 'do the hitch-hiker'.)

What do you do at the Snow Palace?

3 How do you pull up the buck-

Thumb a lift.

Examine the fridge. Get the cheese and close the fridge. Untie the chest and open it.

Get the tie and pistol, 3 Put bucket on hook. Turn the handle and you will hear a voice say 'OK'. Turn the handle again and the bucket will fill with water. Fill the pistol. (STEVEN HOUSE)

'How do I take the bike without waking the bandit and get into the ice palace?' – STUART BRAND

PUSH BIKE, RING the BELL and GIVE BIKE TO the SANMAN (STEVEN HOUSE)





THE HOBBIT ALEX CONSTANTINOU asks:

1 'How do I get to the Elvenking's Halls?'

2 'At the river, how do I get into the boat and use it?'

3 'Where do I find the spiders and the Elvish Clearing?'

1 If the woodelf doesn't capture you, you must make your own way to the Elvenking's Halls. Type in THROW ROPE ACROSS then PULL ROPE. 2 The boat will float across to the

2 The boat will float across to the east side so you CLIMB OUT, then go east and BREAK WEB.

3 GoNE, break the spiders' web again then go north to the Elvish Clearing. (DESMOND CORRIGAN)

'Tell me how to kill the dragon' says ARASH IRANI.

Say to Bard 'Shoot Dragon'. (JASON LIMBER)

JOSEPH DIXON would like to know how to get the boat in Mirkwood. HOLD ROPE, THROW ROPE (repeat fill rope catches boat). PULL ROPE and CLIMB INTO BOAT. (DAVID COOKE)

MATT LUCAS

'How do you get the code out of the vase, and is there a use for the shoet' - DAVID MITCHESON

shoe!" - DAVID MITCHESON TAKE VASE, TIP VASE, DROP VASE, READ NOTE. (R S COLES) I couldn't find any use for the shoe in the notes I have! INSPECTOR FLUKEIT JAMIE SALVAGE wonders 'when in Radley Manor, how do you break the vase?' Give vase to Blunders.

BORED OF THE RINGS
'I am desperately seeking help.
I am a proud owner of the hrilliant game Bored Of The Rings but I am unable to complete it. I have passed through the Morona Gate quite easily but am now stuck on Part Two. I am having problems entering the secret room before the maze and the boar on the bridge. How do I he scape the clutches of Ihe Nazal in the C5?' pleads DALE

Leicestershire.
Insert battery into vending machine. Collect coin. Give coin to pixie and get map. Lift the mat and take the key.
Unlock door. (G SPENCER)

FAIRBROTHER of

PAUL TREGIDGO (again) asks 'how do I find my way out of Morona in Part Two? I've found a map, treasure, and air rifle but I'm still lost.'

Enter the maze and go E,E,N,E,E,S,W,S,E. TAKE POSTER and go W,S,W. Drop the poster to get past Ponce and the others. (GARY JUKES)

SORCERER OF CLAYMORGUE CASTLE

'How do you get into the loft?' -STUART BRAND

CLIMB CHANDELIER and cast Light-Square Spell. Throw CRATE and GO LOFT. (ALEX NG)

'How do you get past the lava stream?' asks DAVID HUB-

Enter the stream, squeeze towel and dry it. (ALEX NG)

MARK DARLINGTON is stuck right at the beginning of this game. He can get to the bottom of the moat but not without drowning! He wants to know if there is something he can do before entering the moat.

before entering the moat.

Dig in the field to reveal a star.

Go west and cast Fire Spell at the tree. Examine ashes to find another star. Go east, enter moat, hold breath, swim down twice, get towel and swim east. Breathe!

(ALEX NG)

PAUL APPLETON wishes to know where the Bliss spell is. Open the cabinet to find the

K STRAIGHT of Norfolk asks how to get to the loft above the balfroom, and the lava flow – and also, what the Lightsquared, Wicked Queen and Lycanthrope spells do.

Climb the chandelier and cast Light-square spell. Throw crate and go loft. Get the potion and jump. Go west, S and push E. Go door, then down. Enter stream. Cast the Lycanthrope spell and enter a hole. Cast the Wicked Queen spell and go ballroom. (Thanks to ALEX NG for all those tips.)

SPIDERMAN

'How do you stop the fan in the duct?' asks STUART BRAND.

To stop fan cast web at fan several times till you can cast web at button. (DUNCAN THOMAS)

DODGY GEEZERS
DAVE GILLOTT has found the match, pills, pickaxe and wire cutters and has got into the breakers' yard and the hut. But the presequestions are still puzzling him.

1 Is there anything to take from the hut?

2 How do you get into the nightclub?

 Under the carpet in the manager's hut is something of interest.

2 The box of matches have some information about the night-club.
(IONATHAN MARSHALL)

(JOHANNA MARSHAE

REBEL PLANET

RICHARD WATSON and ANDREW HIRST have one or two questions for this one: 1 How do you get the wrench and who has it?

2 How do you get past the two customs men at the beginning without being arrested?

3 How do you avoid being arrested by the police cruiser patrol after disembarking from the Caydia?

1 To avoid problems with the Arcadians whose parking space you have pinched, give tickets. The wrench they leave behind is very useful for bending prison bars.

2 When you meet the customs officers just give card and then go complex. To get the laser sword past customs carry it in the lite kube.

3 Attack police (JOHN WILSON)

MINDSHADOW
'In Part Two what does the message in the hat mean and

what is the password for the tickets?" asks a KSS from London.

Enter 'Booth 11' (from the hat) and bribe the drunk in the gutter to get the password (P CORBETT). In Luxemburg Small Inn type 'Booth 11' and you will find the dead body of BM, Bob Masters. Go to the dingy store and type in the password to buy an airline ticket from the clerk (JAMES GALLACHER).

'I have crossed the quicksand but I don't know where to get the straw, stone and steel to make a fire.'

Steel from the dory, straw from the hut. Climb down cliff with vine tied to rock and enter cave for stone. (NIGEL PAYNE)

EYE OF BAIN
COLIN CAMPBELL writes
poetically: 'Picture yourself on a
high ledge at the top of a tower.
All you can see are a window and
a gargoyle. Listed with you is: a
hook, vine, lit torch, strong
glowing sword. And what do you
know, I can't go anywhere but
through the window which I've
just entered through. And I can't
go down the way I came as the
priests always capture me and I
end up as a sacrifice.'

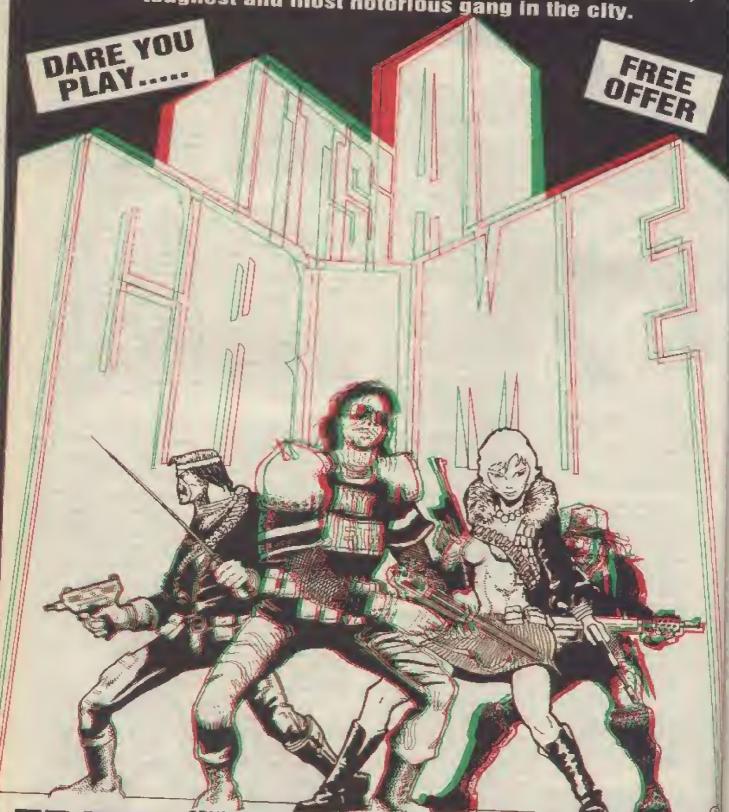
Throw worms off ledge by bird. In top of tower, enter window, tie vine. To get the axe have the hook with you.

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BRENDON KAVANAGH brings the first

AT LAST – just what you have all been waiting for (I hope) – a ratings system for PBM games based on YOUR votes. After a lot of letter-opening, PBM Mailbox proudly presents a new feature which will become a regular, reliable and accurate view of what you think of the games you are playing.

First, here's what the ratings tell you. They're all out of 100.

GAME MASTER

This figure shows what you think of the quality of the game's GM (be it human- or computer-moderated). The higher the score the better the GM. This rating reflects such factors as reliability, accuracy, helpfulness and commitment.

DIPLOMACY

Diplomacy is the haggling/arguing/meeting/planning done by PBMers putside the game environment. A lot of diplomacy can really get a game going; what you do and say outside actual gameplay can matter as much as your actions in it. The higher the score here, the more diplomacy is involved in playing the game well.

A good rulebook is often essential to get to grips with a new game. It should be nicely-produced, easy to read, simple to understand and comprehensive. Again, a high score means a good rulebook.

COMPLEXITY
Some games are much more complex than others. Some, such as KJC Some games are much more complex than others. Some, such as Kuc Games's It's A Crime!, are relatively easy to play and so will receive a lower score here – though of course that doesn't mean they're not worth joining, and they may be especially suitable for PBMers just starting the hobby.

Involved games such as Global Supremacy are quite demanding so receive a higher score. And don't be put off by complex games. They're often the most enjoyable!

EXCITEMENT

It's all very well for a game to have a good GM, an impressive rulebook and so on, but is it fun to play? This rating shows how much the players enjoy their games; it reflects how keen they are to receive their turn report, how much time they take between turns planning for the next, and how much pleasure is gleaned from the whole thing.

OK, there are some very good PBM games on the market. There are also a fair few expensive, even overprized, games. So just how much do you get for your hard-earned/grovelled pennies? Consider here how much the game offers compared with what it costs; if a low-price game has many fine features it's certainly good value for money.

AVERAGE
Well, no prizes for guessing what this figure shows. Here all the other ratings are collated to give an average score. And the games are listed in the order of their Average ratings – highest first, which means Conquest beats the rest this month.





And there we have it – precisely what YOU think of the games you're playing. Have you voted for every single PBM you've licked a stamp for in your time? If not, then fill in the form below, cut it out (or make a photocopy) and post it to READERS' GAME RATINGS, PBM MAILBOX, CRASH, PO Box 10, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1DB. It's the same address for normal PBM Mailbox correspondence, of course – news views queries. Dislogation Directory. news, views, queries, Diplomatic Directory.

Each month there'il be a CRASH cap and T-shirt for the five voting forms picked at random out of the mailbox!



Miles utill	GAMETITLE 1 NO	MY RATINGS - OUT OF 100	GAMEMASTER.	RULEBOOK	COMPLEXITY	EXCITEMENT	VALUE	ADE
	4 5 6 7							IF I

NAMEADDRESS	······································
	POSTCODE

WIN A PRIZE, I'D LIKE THIS CRASH T-SHIRT (CHOSEN FROM THOSE ADVERTISED ON PAGES 166-167)

CRASH Christmas Special 1987

10



software development team, the company has the following opportunities to offer in Entertainment Software Development.

Senior Programmers - O.T.E. £25K

Having been responsible for at least one technically excellent (though not necessarily commercially successful) entertainment software product you will be experienced in 280, 6502 and for agreement of original products and for an opportunity to join an in-house environment committed to the development of original products and conversions of the very highest quality and will expect to call on graphics, music and other support functions of the highest calibre.

Programmers - O.T.E. £15K

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With or without formal qualifications you will already be working in a free-lance or inhouse capacity supporting programmers in your specialist discipline in the development of commercially available/to be published entertainment software products. You will be able to demonstrate a number of different examples of your work and will be looking to put your experience to use whilst developing it further in the production of commercially available products.

All appointees to the above posicions will be offered an attractive working environment, substantial basic salary and an opportunity to develop their ambitions with the full support of the Company's management and financial strength in addition to the above apportunities the company has a requilar flow or gragiant conversion contracts available at attractive rates to free-lancers and is particularly keep to support proven programments and development houses wishing to write and have published by a major for and name of signal games for all popular machines. If you would like to arrange an interview to discuss any of the above opportunities please write, giving full details of your relevant experience to:

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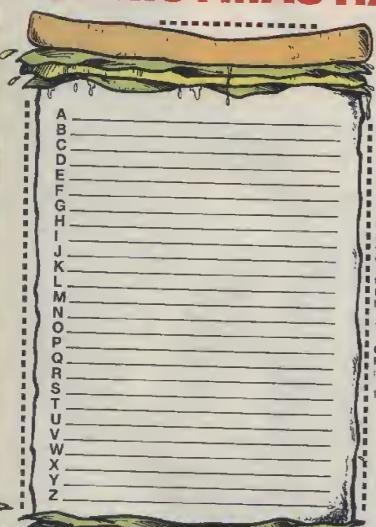


Access

EXPLICABLE IS GOING TO HAPPEN.....



FILL THE SANDWICH OF THE CENTURY AND WIN A CLAW-LICKIN' GOOD HARRODS CHRISTMAS HAMPER FROM



PLEASE CUT ME OUT AND POST ME.



JUST when you thought it was safe to go back to Jeilystone Park - Piranha's jaws open and out climbs a greedy bear. And it's not Paddington, either.

This bear eats a lot more than marmalade – and now you can join Yogl for a midnight feast thanks to Piranha, whose *Yogi Bear* is even now gobbling up space on the Spectrum software shelves. (The official licence of the Hanna-Barbera cartoon character, it was reviewed in CRASH last month.)

But first you've got to satisfy our voracious appetite — by filling in the sandwich below with 26 foods, one beginning with every letter of the alphabet. (Bread and butter are taken for granted, so you'll have to think of another B. And descriptive stuff like 'roasted', 'parboiled' and 'served on a piping hot bed of rice' doesn't count either!)

The first entry picked out of the Comps Minion's eyes (which are bigger than his stomach) will win the frightfully fattening and perfectly posh Harrods School Tuck Box – provided all the foods named are fit for human (or ursine – MESBNOWD†) consumption!

That winner and 30 runners-up will also receive copies of Piranha's Yogi Bear game.

Send your entries to **WELL FED UP WITH PIRANHA COMP**, **CRASH**, **PO Box 10**, **Ludiow**, **Shropshire SYS 1DB**, to arrive by **February 1**. As always, the decision of CRASH's appointed judges in all respects is as final as coffee and mints.

† Man Ed's Short But Nonetheless Obscure Word Dictionary

The Harrods School Tuck Box

Harrods Giant Chae Chip Cookies (400g) Horrods Old English Fruit Cake (450g) Robinson's Grange Barley Water (725ml) Rubinson's Leman Bartey Water (725ml) McFine Penguin (Six Pack) McVitie's Plain Chocolose Homewheat Biscotts (300g) McVifie's Randit (Fice-Pack) Tien Mars Bars Tiea Grnachie Bars Galden Wonder Plain Royales Family Pack Peak Fream Twiglets (100g) KP Salted Pranuts (2009) Bahlsen Curly Peanuts (379) Roka Cheeve Biseuits (150g) Cadhur Dairy Milk Chacolate But (190g)

Cadhury Fruit & Nut Bot (200g) Assorted Jelly Beans (802) Harrods Strawberry Conserve (454g) Harrods Pack Of 40 Indian & Cepton Ten Boys Carnation Hot Chocolate (100g) oscielin's Tonato & Beef Cup-A-Souf Batchelor Thick Mashroom Special Cup-A-Soup-

Packed In A Box



February 1986 Issue No. 25

Released on January 24th Inspiration for a cover image was lacking, so everyone was pleased when Imagine's Mikie become a Smash since it gave Oliver a subject suitable for his particular talents - a figure seen in actum within a dynamic composition. The character of Mikie is so energetic he's simply burst through the cover paper, scattering hearts in his wake - the cover and the game neatly tied in with Saint Valentine's Day. In a way it also acted as a symbol for the new year beginning; CRASH was crashing through again.

The cover's bounciness could also have been taken as a symbol for a new face on the CRASH team. For the first time the reviewing team figured in the masthead, and among the names was one Mike Dunn. As they had been wont to do since CRASH started, Ludlow lads with Spectrums dropped in after school hours to see what was happening, and some of them were dragooned into writing review comments. Mike was one such. Robin Candy told everyone that Mike's school nickname was Skippy because he skipped wherever he went, and this information was soon confirmed when Roger Kean reported that he had almost been knocked flying in the street as Mike skipped violently past him on the way down a Ludlow hill, Skippy is a now a respectable bespectacled college student with a far more sedate gait, but the nickname still sticks.

On a more serious note February marked the start of a run of cover paintings with which Oliver was less than satisfied, though in retrospect some of them are outstanding. It wasn't so much that they were poorly executed, more that he felt uninspired by the subject matter. An illustrator requires a brief for his work and previously he and Roger Kean had worked on the ideas themselves. Naturally, the chosen subject was therefore always one which Oliver enjoyed and the sort of thing he excelled at. Now, with three magazines going, he had to rely far more on the editors for their ideas and briefs, and in the case of CRASH Graeme Kidd seemed to prefer humorous subjects - Mikie was one and Jack The Nipper notoriously so.

Still, this is no reflection on Mikie the game, which got its Smash, the first of two that month for Imagine. The other, also a Konami conversion, was the onomatopoeiac Yie Ar Kung Fu, which received praise for its 'areade style playability', one reviewer commenting that Imagine was fast becoming one of the best development houses in the country. As you can tell from the enthusiasm, these were still the heady days of coin-op conversions: a moment of freshness before the tedium of overkill which would all too soon set in.

Four other games merited Smashes. Martech's Zoids finally made it through; Electronic Pencil Co had done a fine job, maintaining a high standard of graphics and providing an engrossing game. Their innovative approach made mincemeat of the notion that a licence from something as childish as a series of toy monsters means a thinly-disguised piece of marketing schlock. Zoids is Martech's monument for posterity. Ultimate looked back on form with Gunfright, an entertaining advance on their Nightshade, while Gargoyle Games proved they had more in them than complex graphic adventures of the Dun Darach type; Sweepo's World had something in common with Ultimate's Knight Lore and Alien 8 style of presentation, but took it further to provide a game both compelling to play and very funny. In fact it was to be the precursor of a genre which would reach fulfilment in Head Over Heels. Derek, meanwhile, was praising Activision's adventure Mindshadow while berating their lack of marketing for it - an omission the company was not usually noted for . . .

After its recent run of successes - Critical Mass and Saboteur - we featured Durell. Robert White's company had been with us since the earliest Spectrum days and had always strived to be both good and different. It seems sad, as I write this, to reflect that Durell no longer exists in its previous form, sold, as it was at the 1987 PCW Show, to Elite . . .





March 1986 Issue No. 26

Released on February 27th The March cover was, and still is, only the second CRASH cover to feature a photograph as its main element (the first was Issue Six's, a photo of several assembled pieces of Oliver's artumek). Max Headroom had become something of a cult on TV, and for the subsidiary pictures Oliver drew on images from the specially-made feature film about how Max came ima being. The trouble was that as Max was already a created image. Oliver thought painting him ran the danger of making him less than instantly recognisable, hence the photo.

Good software was still catching up with us in March, though Max Headroom had to wait another two months. There were seven Smashes and a lot of near misses. It had to be Mikro-Gen's month, two Smashes and Baule Of The Planets, which got 77%. Three Weeks In Paradise was yet another Wally Week extravaganza which showed that the formula had not quite worn thin yet, while Sir Fred was a fairy tale of damsels in distress and bold, rather well-animated, knights off to their rescue.

US Gold provided cold comfort with the excellent conversion of Winter Games – good enough to get over the multiload problem; Ocean scored with the unusual M.O.V.I.E. – forced perspective, icon control and a good detective story from a new Yugoslavian programmer of an unpronounceable name (later identified as Dusko Dimitrijevic); Mirrorsoft came up with one of the best flight simulations ever in Spitfire 40; and Derek fairly revelled in the conclusion of Level 9's Silicon Worm Trilogy, Worm In Paradise, and Melbourne House's long-awaited Lord Of The Rings.

Among the near misses was Design Design's Forbidden Planet, another ultrahigh-speed 3-D vector from their famous 'Basil' and Simon Brattell, but despite its playability we wondered whether it was different enough from Dark Star to warrant being Smashed. They also had a different type of game out: 2112 was an arcade-adventure in similar style to Dun Darach featuring a mechanoid dog called Poddy. Programmer Graham Stafford took the name from Jeremy Spencer's pet dog, which was often seen in the offices—it was nice to know that some Newsfield personnel appeared in games!

Licensed tie-ins were by now established. Rambo was a good example, Benny Hill's Madcap Chase by Don Priestley for DK'Tronics a rather odd one, Zorro from US Gold a somewhat poorer one, and hovering uneasily somewhere between the brilliant and the banal there was Quicksilva's Fred Flintstone tie-in Yabba Dabba Doo!

On the Playing Tips pages, a new-look Robin Candy peered out. After several complaints in print, the Newsfield art department gave the playing tips a new page heading, and Robin's very outdated photo-graphic was replaced by an Oliver Frey drawing. Robin was pleased by the fact of a revamp, less thrilled by the picture; he wanted no picture at all. The argument became acrimonious, especially when Robin realised it was likely to be used on the following month's Playing Tips Supplement cover. In the end he agreed to the new heading with grave misgivings. It was a shame – though few people inside the company, and no readers, realised it at the time, the argument had caused a serious rift between Robin on one side and Roger Kean and Oliver Frey on the other. The rift was to grow wider.

Till this time software houses had usually put out games under their own name. I have already mentioned Electric Dreams being one of the first attached labels (to Activision), and now CRL – an often uneven producer of software and sometimes a company in search of an identity – launched a new side label called Nu Wave with *I-D. I-D* was to be the first of a series of new 'conundrum' games for people fed up of blasting and maze-walking. As Automata had found with *Deus Ex Machina*, however, CRL was to discover that the money really lay with blasting, and Nu Wave would disappear beneath the old attack waves.



A NEWSFIELD PUBLICATION No.27 APRIL 1986
£1

ZX SPECTRUM

CRASH INTO THE 128K FUTURE

SPECTRUM 128K UP FOR GRABS



A £1,000 KART WITH RAINBIRD YOUR VERY OWN BOMBJACK ARCADE MACHINE

April 1986 Issue No. 27

Released on March 27th

After the cosiness of February's Mikic cover and the entricate interweaving of Max Headroom elements on the March cover, Oliver felt it was time again for an out-and-out shoot-'em-up picture. The arrival of the British 128K Spectrum gove him his opportunity for another surreal space painting, with the new machine figuring as a giant craft like something out o Star Was at most as many imparations awang this year, it was painted fractionally smaller than you see it reproduced, because it had to be done in a huny.

What was life like in CRASH Towers as 1986 began to speed up? 'Crammed' is the answer. The art department had expanded to cope with three magazines. Dick Shiner, a freelance designer whose background was London advertising agencies but who had been living in Ludlow for some years, had helped out over the busy Christmas period . . . and stayed on as Art Director, relieving Oliver Frey of some workload. This also let David Western become Production Controller full-time. Then there were the two layout artists, Gordon Druce and Tony Lorton, and Matthew Uffindell looking after picture reproduction and film planning.

Next floor down, life had become a joke. The administration of accounts, advertising, mail order and subscriptions for three regulines meant every space inch was used. And on the lowest floor the three titles fought for editorial space to write and room to photograph the screenshots. CRASH had been moved into the smallest of the three main rooms and housed its editor, newcomer Hannah Smith (she arrived near the end of this month's schedule) and the regular coterie of reviewers. I floated to fand wherever space opened up for me. It would be nice to say that despite the cramped conditions we were all a jolly bunch, and for the most part that was the case, but tight schedules, sometimes missed, led to friction and patches of bad feeling here and there.

The arrival of the 128K Spectrum was a diversion ,though, and it was well and truly dissected through several articles, not least one written by ZZAP! Staff Writer Julian Rignall, which investigated games upgraded to take account of the new machine's capabilities. These included Robin Of The Wood, Nodes Of Yesod, Three Weeks In Paradise and the engagingly renamed Sweevo's Whirled.

Sweevo's came in for the heavy treatment in Robin Candy's Playing Tips Supplement, 24 pages of tips and maps, and the massive listing by Phil Churchyard that created a Sweevo's World screen editor. The value of this unique program has since been underlined by the number of mappable 3-D games that now offer game designers as a matter of course. And the success of this screen editor's cassette version, then available from CRASH, was one of the first sparks that led to thoughts about a Newsfield software house - but realisation of that particular dream would take some time.

I had a busy time with the Forum, what with the many letters about the Friday The 13th cover (December) and Tony Bridge, adventure columnist with Popular Computing Weekly, complaining bitterly about how he had been ripped off by the CRASH Christmas Special edition. His comments were to lead to a massive vote of confidence for that issue in later

Less confidence was apparent with tie-ins. We were entering the period where software houses would grab anything licensable whether it was suitable for a game or not, often rushing out the result to capitalise on the licensed character's popularity in other media. Elite came off best with a Smash for the venerable arcade original Bombjack, but Ocean's Transformers was disappointing from Denton Designs, CRL's Blade Runner was a sad affair and Britannia's Play Your Cards Right, based on the Bruce Forsyth TV game, was dreadful. There was a warning here, but few took heed, rushing madly into more licences, while letters began suggesting that the very idea of a tie-in meant a poor product. Originality would soon become a keyword, and in the CRASH Readers' Awards announcement that was made plain - it was Firebird's Elite that swept the board.



ZX SPECTRUM

A NEWSFIELD PUBLICATION No.28 MAY 1986

£1

STARSTRUCK & STRIPPED

STARSTRIKE II SAMANTHA FOX POKER

SPRING SMASHES
SYBERUN WAY OF THE TIGER PING PONG.

OF MARE REVIEW

May 1986 Issue No. 28 Released on April 24th The editorial brief was simple enough; make something out of Sarrantha Fox Strip Poker and Starstrike W. It was an inhibiting notion, and one which Oliver left till he could no longer avoid doing the illustration. With this cover, a very popular one, it is the strength and dynamism of Oliver's composition that makes it work at all. He was pleased with effect, but in general he haved the allustration and felt it was rather like a poorly-licensed game – the subject was unsuitable for an exciting picture.

The month's two big bits of news were of a very different nature. Most important was the announcement, as the issue went to press, that Alan Michael Sugar's Amstrad had bought out Sir Clive Sinclair's Sinclair Research, and thus the ZX Spectrum would from then on belong to Amstrad. There were very mixed feelings about this move at the time, and few people today could honestly say that many of their doubts have been removed since.

The other was that the Audit Bureau Of Circulations had declared CRASH the biggest-selling computer title in Britain, overtaking both Sinclair User and Computer & Video Games (though the latter had a marginally higher figure when foreign sales were taken into account). It was a triumph for everyone, but especially for the original tiny team that had dared to challenge the entrenched positions of so many established titles. W H Smith, before the launch of Issue 1, had said that CRASH could never really succeed as a games-only, single-user magazine; two years later we had proved them wrong.

It was a happy moment for the whole company, but before the issue was completed, something quite sad occurred. The rumbling arguments between Robin Candy and Roger Kean, which had flared up over Roger's insistence that there should be a picture of Robin on the new Playing Tips heading because there had always been one of him there, suddenly reached flashpoint. There was an argument in the middle of the office and as a result it was decided not to use Robin any more. He was able to take a last look at his Playing Tips being laid out in the art department before leaving. However, as every CRASH reader knows, it may have been the last of Robin Candy's Playing Tips, but it was by no means the end of Robin, though a year was to go by before his reappearance.

Max Headroom finally arrived, and though it rated fairly well (85%) it was something of a disappointment. Not so Realtime's Starstrike II, however, with its filled-in vector graphics pushing the Spectrum beyond limits already set by pundits, sitting atop a fast and complex shoot-'em-up game. We also Smashed Ultimate's Cyberum, often forgotten since but more of a follow-on from Lunar Jetman than anything to do with the isometries of Knight Lore etc.

After the huge success of the film the game version of Back To The Future from Electric Dreams came as a damp squib, a mishmash plot based on the film's action but with no game behind it. There was far more fun to be had with Imagine's excellent implementation of Konami's Ping Pong and Gremlin's karate-book tie-in The Way Of The Tiger. But the game which caused most excitement was Ocean's Bauman from Jon Ritman and Bernie Drummond, who had gone out of their way to make the most densely detailed isometric graphics yet seen. And the game was good too.

Near the end of April as the May issue concluded, the three Newsfield directors, the brothers Frey and Roger Kean, took a week off in Cornwall to work out the details for a new magazine they were planning. It was to have a broad subject base and be aimed at the so-called youth market. No-one could think of what to call it, so for the time being they jokingly gave it the working title of LM – Lloyd Mangram's Leisure Monthly. It stuck.



A NEWSFIELD PUBLICATION
No. 29 JUNE 198

ZX SPECTRUM

HEAVY ON THE MAGICK

GARGOYLE

SPINDIZZY,

QUAZATRON

ELITE GAMES ON

UETIM/II.e

June 1986 Issue No. 29 Released on May 29th

This cover was tied to Heavy On The Magick, the latest from Gargoyle Games. In the past Oliver had been happy to work with their games as cover themes, but he had hale chance to see this one. However, the other options for the momh's cover had already been used for ZZAP? and AMTIX? (notably Redhawk, on AMTIX!). The editorial decision was postponed all the last moment, as was increasingly the practice, leaving only hours for the illustration to be done. Again, composition turned what could have been a weak cover into a powerful image.

CRASH was continually adding new sections. In this month John Minson went solo as his Fear & Loathing page was detached from the news, freeing him to be even more irreverent (or should that be irrelevant?) about the software industry. John had earlier done a piece about play-by-mail games, and now Brendon Kavanagh arrived to start a regular column devoted to the subject. Then there was the Art Gallery - or On The Screen, as it became known - a page of readers' Spectrum art sponsored by Rainbird, producers of the Art Studio graphics utilities. And to top that off, we began the first of a long series (Genesis) aimed at finding the CRASH reader who could design a complete game worthy of being programmed by Design Design and marketed properly by Domark.

Domark were in need of a lift too, for after an age Friday The 13th had arrived. We were kinder than ZZAP! (they gave it an appropriate 13%), but it was still pretty dire. So was much else on the tie-in front: Ocean's TV licence V was poorly thought-out and boring, TV's The Young Ones fared hardly better from Orpheus, and in an attempt at a really obscure tie-in Firebird gave us The Comet Game to coincide with the arrival of Halley's interplanetary body

in our skies. The natural phenomenon was magnificent, the game was silly

Derek had been quiet for some months, with nothing very inspiring to review, but he got Heavy On The Magick and delightedly Smashed it. Meanwhile Gary Liddon was given the task of solo reviewing - a departure from the norm - for Red Hawk, a comic tie-in from Melbourne House. That was a Smash too. So was the excellent Spindizzy, which restored Electric Dreams to some of its former glory. The Spectrum version was by Paul Shirley (aided by Phil Churchyard, who had done the Sweevo's World screen editor for Robin Candy's Playing Tips Supplement).

It was a great game month, because there was also the first ever 128K Smash (Knight Tyme from M.A.D.), one for Sean Masterson's Frontline (the CCS Desert Rats), a marvellous conversion of the Commodore 64 hit Bounder (Gremlin Graphics), another for Ultimate in Pentagram, and Quazatron, an extremely clever conversion that was almost a rewrite of Hewson's huge Commodore 64 hit Paradroid. That was by Andrew Braybrook, but Steve Turner's Spectrum Quazatron borrowed from it and reinvented it, making it a wholly new

and interesting product.

The big problem, of course, was the Playing Tips, now rudderless without Robin. The answer lay with Hannah Smith, and though she might seem in retrospect to have been an obvious choice, a lot of soul-searching went into the decision. Would a predominantly male teenage readership accept a 'girlie tipster' stepping into the shoes of Robin Very Popular Candy? We thought they just might. They did. Promoting Hannah as the 'computer world's first and only female tipster' would lead to a veritable war with Computer & Video Games who claimed that their Melissa Ravenflame held that pre-eminent position. But at least readers could ring Hannah and speak with her, whereas doing the same with C&VG led to long silences. It was to lead to an attempted confrontation at the 1986 PCW Show when Melissa Ravenflame stickers running down Hannah were plastered over everything, including the Newsfield stand. Hannah issued a head-to-head challenge, which, not unsurprisingly, 'Melissa' declined.



A NEWSFIELD PUBLICATION
No.30
JULY 1986
£1

ZX SPEC

SUMMERTIME SMASHES

JACK

THE NIPPER

SPLIT

PERSONALITIES

MONTHLY SPECTRUM SOFTMARE REVIEW

GHOSTS AND GOBLINS

Tthe

MORE PREVIEWS

July 1986 Issue No. 30

Released on June 26th

It's not a reflection on the gome it portrays, Grentin Graphics's Jack The Nippor - but of all the covers he has painted, this remains the one Oliver hates the most. Its subject matter runs counter to everything he enjoys illustrating. His strength hies in action, strong composition and powerful figure work. For days he was despondent at the thought of a bena, and in an in all FASTI and now in was going to do it. Under protest, at the less hour, he penned and coloured it, and it was a creditable effort.

It was an indication of how 'professional' the organisation was becoming when, in the middle of June, the management sat down to design the Newsfield stand for the forthcoming PCW Show. Previously, the magazines' attendance had been a case either of wandering round or of restriction to something resembling a long table with hand-lettered signs. This year, we were told, there would be a proper stand built by a contractor. Gosh, were we excited. But that was ages away, so who cared?

Rather more to the point was the argument about the spelling of 'magie'. Gargoyle Games had insisted on Heavy On The Magick, now Level 9 gave us The Price of Magik. Derek Brewster did not enter into the discussion, preferring instead to award Level 9 a Smash. He must have been pleased, not so much because good adventures had been a little thin on the ground, but because there were fewer and fewer full-price adventures appearing. The trend would continue, and today the majority of 8-bit adventures are provided through mail order from committed individual programmers.

Besides The Price Of Magik we had Jack The Nipper, which created yet another cute character for Gremlin Graphics's repertory company of cute characters and got its Smash for being highly playable, entertaining and having 'masterful graphics'. Then there was Ghosts 'N Goblins, awaited with bated breath - would the popular Capcom coin-op be a success or a flop for Elite? They pulled it off, and Ghosts' N Goblins was one of the best conversions from an arcade original yet seen. And finally, just to prove they could do it, Domark came up with Splitting Images, not a TV tie-in, but a block puzzle based on caricatures of the famous. It was irresistible and gave Domark their first ever Smash.

Licences were in the doldrums again, apart from Ghosts 'N Goblins, for Mirrorsoft's game version of the film of Biggles was very disappointing, not very innovative and consisted of three poorly-implemented subgames - it was rather like the film, in fact. And US Gold got themselves into terrible trouble with mistimed World Cup fever. It was almost instantly clear to us that the much-hyped World Cup Carnival was a minutely modified version of Artic's two-year-old and forgettable World Cup Soccer. It cost £9.95, though remaindered versions of Artic's original were to be had for £1.99. Retailers, distributors and buyers reacted as one in an outcry. Later, US Gold was forced to admit that they had planned a far better game, but programming delays and marketing problems had overtaken them. Timing was of the essence and in the end a decision was taken to buy and repackage the Artic game instead. In a way it provided a perfect example of what, at the worst, was so wrong with licensed and endorsed games. At best it was misguided, at worst it was seen by the public as a cynical attempt to pretend an old game was something new and get everyone to buy it all over again for the sake of a few bits of added packaging.

Quietly, in the midst of this, veteran software house New Generation pushed out the Spectrum version of Cliff Hanger, a sort of cowboy forerunner of Road Runner. It was a moderately enjoyable game, notable most of all for the fact that the advert told a story; cheques and postal orders were to be made payable to Virgin Games. It was to be New Generation's last fling before quietly disappearing.







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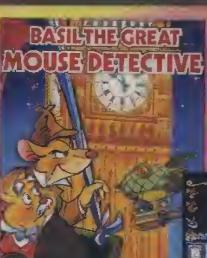
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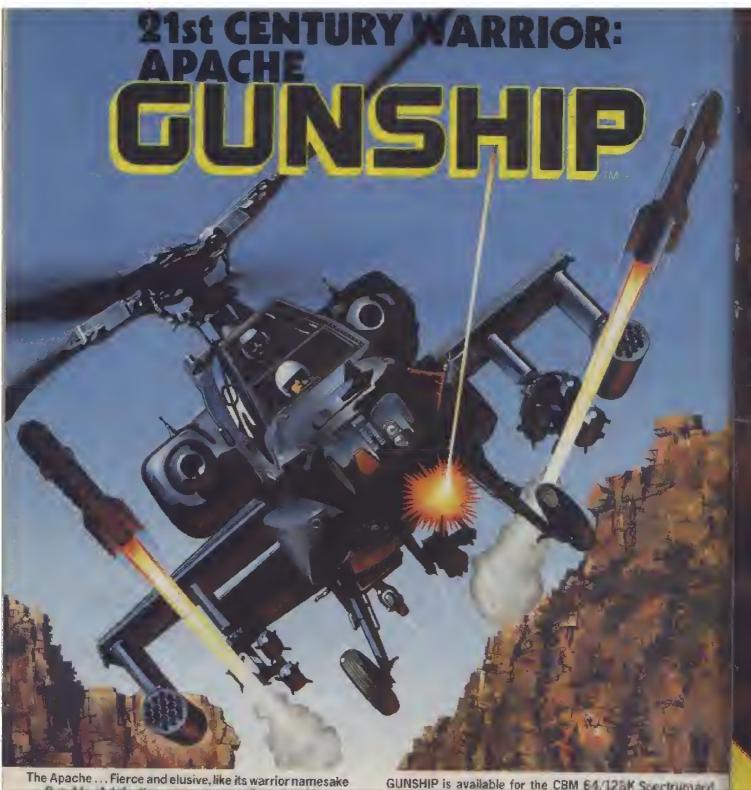
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February 1987 Issue No. 37 Released on January 22nd

I an Graig returned to the cover for the New Year with Ocean's Top Gun. It proved quite a popular illustration with readers, though I thought it suffered from problems similar to those of the Lightforce painting three issues earlier—daubiful definition of areas and a very rough finish which prevented the muchine from looking like polished silver. And it was a single-minded image, lacking the visual gag which had become so much the hallmark of GRASH cover paintings.

We now enter a very difficult year for Newsfield, for CRASH, and for me to describe. I shall linger less on the software, which is dealt with in my 1987 Lookback, and concentrate more on the internal affairs of the magazine. As we entered 1987 no-one had any idea the turmoil that lay ahead.

People tend to regard a company as a smooth-working entity, but that's very misleading. It would be far better to compare a company to an individual, or even at times to a family. When you meet someone you know slightly in the street and they wave hello to you, you never stop to think of the problems they may have – just like you do. And a company, however familiar and successful, has problems too. At times Newsfield has been like a large family, with all the members heading in much the same direction, yet split by family rifts, arguments, even feuds. The first upset of 1987 came when Sean Masterson resigned before Christmas to devote himself to his love of fantasy gaming; on Frontline he was replaced by Philippa Irving. But it was far from being the last change.

LM had been launched successfully, yet there were thunderclouds. It looked like it was going to be a struggle to get the essential advertising in to support the very expensive publication, with its large editorial staff and many contributors adding to the usual costs of typesetting, repro and printing. Against this worrying background were set the computer magazines' problems, few of which the public saw.

The biggest concerned CRASH. It was really a magazine without an editor, which is a bit like a ship without a captain, with no-one to guide it. Graeme Kidd's time was shared among all three computer magazines, and CRASH seemed to lose some of its direction. The spelling mistakes and the typos were slipping back in, despite Ciarán Brennan's valiant efforts to stem them. But he was working on ZZAP! and AMTIX! as well, so there was too much subbing for him to do alone. For the February issue, Roger Kean was called back from LM's Gravel Hill office to help sort it out; otherwise the issue would never even have made it to the printer on time.

In the Art Department, where Oliver was busy designing LM, there was also a serious problem. Both Ian Craig and Dick Shiner had found they preferred being freelance to suffering the punishing regular schedules of magazine work, and as this issue went to press both of them resigned their jobs (though Dick, who still lives in Ludlow, continued doing some freelance work for Newsfield). Oliver was faced once again with having to do all the covers, but for the rest there were four layout artists, and Gordon Druce became art director of the three computer titles – it was sufficient.

Discussions about the CRASH reviews had been popular for quite some time, and as early as August 1986 a straw poll of the regular reviewers revealed that they would not mind having their names with their comments. To protect them, this hadn't been done before; CRASH is unlike most other computer magazines because most of the reviewers are not professional writers or critics, but local school and college people. The anonymity was beginning to irritate readers, however, and so with the New Year, we changed the system. Ben Stone, Mike Dunn and Paul Sumner became real names, and to go with it a mild revamp of the ratings took place, with Use Of Computer and Getting Started both being replaced by Presentation. It was to be the first of several changes in the three-year-old rating system.





March 1987 Issue No. 38 Released on February 26th

The March cover was a masterpieve of magical atmosphere, a theme in blue mist. As usual time was the problem. The subject was to be a composite image to sun the month's two Smashes, Foud and Ranarama. Oliver opted for lightly painting vague outlines, then airbrushing blue and black over the surface, leaving himself. with the task of picking out highlights and the lightning with a brush in white. The accuracy of the line is hard to achieve but Oliver makes it look easy - and that is his wisardry.

Some of the big software houses seemed to be coming unstuck with the new year; US Gold faltered with their licensed Masters Of The Universe (Gremlin is making another attempt now) which received only 28%; Melhourne House did little better with Bazooka Bill (42%) and just as badly with 2000AD's Judge Dredd - they were working on Inspector Gadget too, but that would never see the light of day; Konami's Jail Break was disastrous (47%); Electric Dreams's ancient zapper Temped raised only to average licker at 02%; US Cold tried ten-pin positing, but Tenth Frame only knocked down 56% of its skittles; Leisure Genius finally made it out with Scalextric, and that got 57%. It was left to Steve Turner's Ranarama for Hewson and a £1.99 budget game, Feud, on Mastertronic's Bulldog label to win the Smashes.

What was going wrong? Hard to say, but the failed games had a few things in common: a rushed appearance, little content and often very poor graphics. We wondered whether

Christmas had knocked the stuffing out of everyone.

Things were little better in Ludlow. For several months it had become clear that advertising revenue in the Amstrad CPC field had almost dried up because the sales of games simply didn't warrant software houses spending money to promote them. So AMTIX! was badly hit financially, and during early February it became obvious the magazine could no longer survive the way it was. An attempt was made to change its nature dramatically, but forecasts showed that wouldn't work either. Newsfield's management decided to close AMTIX! down, and its editorial team of five was told the bad news - they would become redundant after their April issue went to press in mid-March. Only Richard Eddy would be retained to work on CRASH.

But meanwhile CRASH had its problems too. The experiences of February's issue were repeated, with Roger Kean being hauled away from LM to help put together the reviews at the last moment. He was alarmed at the way they were being written: this was not the fault of the reviewing team - the reviewers' sole responsibility was to play the games and write a short critical comment on each - but derived from the lack of editorial control. Roger and Ciarán spent a fraught weekend furiously rewriting just about everything, and then Roger spent the next two days in film planning, helping finish off the very late issue.

It seemed like the last straw, and once CRASH had gone to press, Newsfield reluctantly decided some rearrangement was essential. The financial problem of LM was another story, but editorially it was running very smoothly, so Roger Kean returned to King Street and once again took up editorship of CRASH, the magazine he had helped found. Lec and Hannah left

in the reshuffle, and Graeme Kidd was moved to Gravel Hill to edit LM.

The full-time team Roger now inherited included myself (also doing other jobs), Ciarán Brennan, who became Assistant Editor, Richard Eddy and Ben Stone. For three days a week Ian Phillipson came in to write 'intros', the long descriptive sections of the reviews. He had been hired just before Roger took over and was still uncertain how the reviews should be tackled, but it wouldn't be long before Ian became an essential part of the new CRASH. The young part-timers included Mike Dunn and Paul Sumper, but there were a few others waiting to try their hands as well. We all got ready for a revitalised CRASH.





April 1987 Issue No. 39

Released on March 26th A new spirit swept CRASH; for the first time in ages Oliver and Roger were able to work together on uleus for the cover. The general apinion was to put Ocean's Head Over Heels on the cover, but Oliver was alarmed that this could lead to yet another 'cutesy' picture. He wanted something tougher. Roger suggested basing the painting on the Evil Emperor instead, and using the idea of the space between the planets in the game's scenario. That did the trick, and Oliver turned in one of his best pictures yet.

There was a new spirit indeed. It had already been suggested just after Christmas that CRASH was falling behind on colour content, that our rivals were providing more colour screenshots than we were. One of Roger Kean's first jobs was to assess whether Newsfield's increasingly experienced film-planners, already adept at putting tinted boxes, coloured text and so on into pages, could tackle the complexities of planning pages which included the laser-scanned four-colour separations from which full-colour photos are printed. This job would normally be undertaken by a professional repro house.

Cost had been the prohibiting factor. Normally it costs approximately £60 for every colour picture to be scanned by a laser scanner (the equipment is too expensive for Newsfield to have in-house): 30 reviews each getting two colour pictures would therefore cost around £3,600, far more than affordable. But if all the photographs taken from the monitor could be exactly the same size as each other, then whole batches of transparencies could be stitched together and scanned at the same time. (They'd have to be the same size so that when the pictures were all enlarged together by the same percentage they'd fit the magazine's column widths precisely.)

When these sets of separations returned from the London company which does Newsfield's scanning, the film-planning department could fit them into pages already laid out by our Art Department. Using this method, Roger and Cameron managed to trim the cost of screenshots down to about £10 per picture, enabling CRASH to go almost full-colour.

We tried the new system out with the April issue, though not with every screen, and it worked well. From now on CRASH would be colour throughout, whenever feasible. And because toe now kept the separations, CRASH would always be able to reuse any picture whenever required at no extra cost for features like Playing Tips.

Lee Paddon's interview with Australian programmer Steve Taylor went into the issue, but before it was printed it required an update. Steve worked for Melbourne House, but news arrived that Melbourne House UK had been sold to budget giants Mastertronic. It may have been a surprise to the public, but the deal, it seemed, had been under discussion for some time.

Mastertronic had come a long way since the days when their budget range was really cheap rubbish. But with labels like M.A.D. and Bulldog they were often putting out quality games at still very low prices, and now they owned one of the industry's oldest and most respected full-price software houses – though it has to be said that Melbourne House had been going through a poor patch for some six months.

And here again was a second consecutive month where there were only two Smashes, and one was a budget game – in this case Firebird's *I*, *Ball*. The other was, of course, Ocean's *Head Over Heels*, widely regarded as the best game Jon Ritman and Bernie Drummond had written. It was hardly apparent at the time, but *Head Over Heels* was part of a new pattern for Ocean who, like the rest of us, realised that full-price games were fighting for their lives in the 8-bit marketplace. 1986 had been an uneven year for them and, because of the volume Ocean put out, they were as much to blame as anyone for the low profile licensed games had achieved in the public's mind. And the the budget houses were profiting from that.

An insight, one of rate honesty from a software publisher, was offered by Ocean's Gary Bracey when he told CRASH that Ocean's recent record had not been as good as it should have been, both for the quality of product and for the accuracy of advertised delivery times. It was this open recognition of past failings that would now motivate Ocean for the coming year; they would do their very best to offer value for money.





May 1987 Issue No. 40 Released on April 30th

The Endusco Racer cover is a very straightforward one, and it was chosen largely for the opportunity it affered Oliver to produce an exciting action picture. The main figure is smaller than w might have been because there had to be a strap announcing the Playing Tips Supplement, which was nicely tied in: the biker looks like he has just leapt over it. Never one to miss a light-hearted dig when the occasion arises, Oliver made the crushing biher wear a helmet adorned with the letters CVG.

For the April issue, Roger Kean had become CRASH Editor halfway through its production schedule. With May's issue he felt he could really get to grips with some of the problems that had been ailing the magazine.

The reviews were first. Several previous issues had failed to cover anything like the volume of games released in the month, and it had always been CRASH's boast that we did cover everything. The problem was that since the early days the number of pages devoted to features and specialist sections like Frontline, Tech Niche and Adventure Trail had expanded dramatically. Increasing the number of review pages would mean expanding the magazine beyond its economic size. Much tighter writing would be required form now on, so that a review would take up less space and more would fit in.

Roger and Ciarán looked closely at recent reviews and decided that many were heavily padded without providing sensible information. One result of the new attitude was that the issue packed in 37 reviews (more than for ages, excluding February's issue) and still left space for the other features, including the 32-page Playing Tips Supplement. The reviews were also split into three categories, each with a different design style: Smashes, those above 50% Overall and those below, allowing us more freedom to give short reviews to games that hardly deserved a full page to themselves.

Then there was the extra colour: in May's issue virtually every game was featured in colour (apart from some latecomers and the adventures), even in the Playing Tips and Frontline. Readers seemed to approve of the colour, but not every letter was so kind about the shorter reviews – the shortness of the *Krakout* review was especially resented by some.

The number of reviewers also came under consideration. Ben, Paul, Mike and Richard were doing a sterling job, but it was felt that some fresh blood was required, and over the next few months that would arrive. The first new face in was that of Gareth Adams, another Ludlow local studying at the College, and a CRASH reader from the start.

A casualty of the new broom was my Hall Of Slime. To be honest it had outgrown its usefulness and there was a thought of axing it to make way for something new, though no-one knew quite what at that time.

While the dust appeared to be settling at the King Street offices after six months of unrest, Newsfield was facing a serious problem with LM. Despite its obvious popularity with readers, LM was in financial difficulties. Circulation was increasing nicely, but advertisers were still too wary of the 'youth market' and thus the magazine's revenue was almost nonexistent and it lost nearly £20,000 each issue. The gamble had not paid off. It was like AMTIX! all over again, only on a spectacularly larger scale. Emergency management meetings were held to see if anything could be done, but to no avail. A few days before Issue 5 was due to go to press at the end of April an announcement was made to the company that LM would have to close down.

For the second time within two months, the management were faced with making staff redundant. It was a terrible blow, personally, in terms of prestige and financially. Trade papers, including Computer Trade Weekly, erroneously suggested that Newsfield had lost half a million on L.M. The real figure was nothing like that, but it was a heavy enough lost. The leave-taking a few days later was sad – but on the bright side, all the LM staffers found themselves other publishing work within a few weeks.





June 1987 Issue No. 41

Released on May 28th What can I say about this cover that hasn't already been said in detail in the Forum? It did cause CRASH trouble with WH Smith, who at one point considered withdrawing the issue from sale, but then contented themselvet with extracting a written promise from Newsfield to be more careful in the future. The moral issue apart, it remains a powerfully painted image which suits the game ideally. It also caused C&VG to hiccop, because apparently Palace had given them the 'exclusive cover', unavare we were doing one. C&VG evidently withdress theirs.

Not everyone on the LM team was made redundant. Graeme Kidd remained in place as an editor without portfolio and Publishing Executive, and Barnaby Page, LM's Subeditor, came to CRASH to become its Assistant Editor. Clarán Brennan moved over to ZZAP! full-time.

And LM's closure was an ill wind which blew some good for the casual reviewers because more work stations were created as more Amstrad PCW8256 'Joyces', used for writing, came to CRASH from the defunct magazine. CRASH itself had moved again, returning from the middle to the lower floor

And another new-old face (re)appeared. While Roger Kean was editing LM at Gravel Hill, Robin Candy started turning up for the odd chat. The strains of the previous year were exorcised, and with Roger's return to King Street and CRASH, Robin indicated he would like to start writing again, largely because he needed finance for his band, Ad Lib To Fade, and because he had recently taken up skiing in Switzerland, which is an expensive pursuit! His first task was an article on the history of software houses and the changes in attitudes over the past four years. Robin's return seemed to complete the feeling that the old CRASH spirit was back in force.

The new spirit ushered in video reviews, well aware that there would be catcalls from some readers crying 'LM!'. To be truthful, those first few were written for LM, but the reasoning behind including them had not been lost (in reverse) on the fantasy film magazine Star Burst, which every month reviewed computer games. CRASH readers, we argued, are likely to be heavily into video-watching, so it makes sense. And despite several mutters of protest, the experiment seems to have worked well for most readers.

Recent independent market research has shown that we were right—of a range of magazines aimed at the 'youth market', including Smash Hits and the weekly music papers, CRASH and ZZAP! readers came out as the most avid hirers of videos. You are also, it transpires from the same research, the biggest purchasers of blank audio tapes—though that's probably a subject we shouldn't touch upon . . . !

Not to be outdone by my Playing Tips Supplement in the May issue, Derek Brewster provided a special supplement for adventurers, which included two Smashes for *The Pawn* and *Shadows Of Mordor*.

Robin Candy became involved in an interesting project almost immediately upon his return to the fold. As work on this issue began, Roger and Richard Eddy had visited programmer Pete Cooke at his home in Leicester to have a look at the part-completed Micronaut One, his first game for Nexus. At that time Pete had only designed three of the game's four tunnel networks with a special utility he'd devised. Everyone thought it would be a good idea if someone from CRASH designed the fourth and hardest. Richard volunteered. However, he was due to attend a journalism course in London which cut across tunnel-designing, so Robin took the utility home and designed a network himself. He was never credited in the game, but to avoid any accusations of hidden bias Roger and Barnaby mentioned Robin's involvement in the next month's editorial. And fortunately, when Micronaut One arrived it was quite good enough to speak for itself without any personal partiality to boost its rating.





July 1987 Issue No. 42

Released on June 25th

After Dan Date and the original Hulton Bagle comic, the greatest inspiration to the younger Oliver Frey had been the films of James Bond (he has them all, except the subject of this cover, on video). So it was no hardship for Oliver to do a Bond illustration for Domark's The Living Daylights, Irwas good timing, too, because this issue hit the streets several days before the film opened in London, making CRASH one of the first magazines of any type to earry the image.

Synchronicity is a bit like déjà vu in reverse: if you hear or read a strange word you have never heard before, and then, over the next few days, several times you happen to see or hear that word used, that is synchronicity. Early in the month of June, Roger Kean attended a software fling on a Thames boat given by MicroProse. Mingling with the massed computer journalists, he was bemused to be confronted by someone from Computer & Video Games who informed him that they knew Newsfield was planning to break with its machine-specific tradition and publish a multicomputer magazine rather like C&VG. It was certainly news to Roger, though, he said, he kept a 'poker face'

Two days later Newsfield's advertising department offered up a plan for a multicomputer entertainment magazine to cover all popular 8-bit and 16-bit computers, not to outdo CRASH or ZZAP! but to complement them. A few hours later, when no-one outside Newsfield's management had been told of the proposal, someone rang up from a software house to ask how long it would be before the new magazine would happen. It seemed like an omen!

A few days later THE GAMES MACHINE was born, in concept at least, aimed to publish its first issue in time for The PCW Show in late September. A fortnight later we first heard that Future Publishing intended launching Ace - now that's synchronicity!

Meanwhile CRASH was settling in nicely. Three more reviewers joined the stable: Robin Candy, now doing comments, Mark Rothwell, a friend of the brothers Rignall, and then Nick Roberts. Nick lived in Ludlow, had read CRASH for three years and feit he could take the Tips off my shoulders. To try him out, Roger asked him to do review comments, and so he too started coming in after school hours. His quiet, no-nonsense attitude quickly earned him everyone's respect, and it was clear that it would not be long before my temporary Playing Tips stint ended.

And in fact there was a fourth reviewer. Dominic Handy had been a regular visitor to the Towers over three years, usually to buy games from the mail-order department - though his views on some games occasionally found their way into print via one or other of the reviewers - but also to undertake the odd writing job. As a film buff he was a natural for the new video section, and he started coming in more and more often.

The scope of CRASH continued to expand, with features on special effects in The Living Daylights and on the Nintendo console adding more reading matter to the magazine's Spectrum core.

And an unusual aspect of this CRASH was the OINK! Supplement. This had been arranged two months earlier in conjunction with the anarchic comic's publishers, IPC, and CRL, who were producing a game based on its piggy antics. To my knowledge, this was the first time anything like this had been tried in a computer magazine, and we were interested to see the reaction. Predictably, it was mixed! Many thought it insulting to have a young children's comic in CRASH, yet newsagents had been moving it out of reach, considering OINK!'s contents to be of a nature more adult than was suitable for youngsters.

We saw an early version of the game on the Commodore, were given a rather useless Spectrum screenshot (the background only), and to date, that's been that . . .

At the very moment when it seemed the year's earlier troubles had become a memory, an earthquake shock hit us. Without warning Gary Penn, ZZAP! Editor, resigned, saying he was worn out. As he had some holiday owed, he left at the end of the week, and everyone held their breaths to see what would happen . . .





This directory gives details of every game and piece of educational software ever reviewed in CRASH Issues 1-47 inclusive - that's nearly every Spectrum product of the last four years.

Titles beginning with numbers are listed at the start of the directory, and titles beginning with 'The' are listed under their second word.

There are a few utilities here, but the second half of the CRASH Directory (to be published in Issue 49) will include complete lists of utilities and hardware reviewed as well as indexes of all the playing tips, maps and major features ever published in CRASH.

The two sections of the CRASH Directory can be detached from the magazines and kept in the CRASH History binders, which will be available in early 1988.

The CRASH & Spectrum History

The entry for each piece of software gives its name, producer and Overall CRASH percentage, and the issue and page of CRASH in which it is reviewed, as follows:

title producer Overall% | Issue/page

Early CRASHes rated adventures out of ten rather than 100, strategy gemes were not at first given marks, and educational software has never been given percentages - those aren't accidental omissions!

Four years of Spectrum software - 1,591 products listed

THE CRASH DIRECTORY

160 Mastertronic 72% 1942 Elite 53% 1984 Incentive 76% 1985 Mastertronic 21%	35/35 33/24 2/104 25/20	Admiral Graf Spee Temptation : Adventure Adventure Software Adventure inter 7/10
1994 Vision 75%	3/52	Adventures Of St Bernard Carr
2003 A Space OddityDK Tronics 49%	3/124	58%
2112 Design Design 83%	26/40	Affaire Vera Gruz Infogrames 85
3 Deep Space Postern 44%	1/97	Afghan Attack Southern Softwa
3D Bat Attack Cheetah Soft 51%	6/109	Africa Gardens Gilsoft 84%
30 Lunattack Hewson Consultants 90%	4/16	Aftershock Interceptor 98%
30 Seiddab Attack Hewson Consultants	0.011	Agent Orange Ain'f 59%
79%	3/114	Agent XMastertronic 85%
30 Tank Duel Realtime 83%	7/88	Ahhhi!!CRL61%
3D The Best Of Vortex Vortex	42 /15 4 /116	Air Defence CCS
4Star J K Greye 25% 720°US Gold 81%	47 /26	Airbase Invader CP Software 68 Airline Cases Computer Simula
A Day In The Life Micromega 59%	15/46	Ainvalf Elite 90%
ABCAtic	2/98	Alcatraz Harry Mastertronic 43
ATRAM Websters	12/160	Alchemist Imagine 85%
ATV Simulator Code Masters 66%	46/130	Alien Areus Press
AcademyCRL 92%	36/178	Allen 8 Ultimate 95%
Accelerator Century City 66%	13/23	Alien Evalution Greinlin Graphi.
Ace Cascade 81%	32/13	Alien Highway Vortex 88%
Ace Of Aces US Gold 62%	3B /102	Alien Swarm/Arena K-Tel 57%
Acrojet US Gold 83%	37/36	Aliens Electric Dreams 84%
Action Biker Mastertronic 52%	19/17	Allans (US version) Electric Dre
Action Force Virgin Games 35%	46/28	All Or Nothing Abbex 72%
Action Reflex Mirrorsoft 88%	31/28	Alphabeth A'N F Software
Ad Astra Gargoyle 80%	4/14	AmauroteMad92%
Adder Attack Mogul 64%	4/85	American Football Argus Press

Admiral Graf Spee Temptation 54%	1/103
Adventure Adventure Software 84%	36/151
Adventure/and Adventure International	
7/10	14/104
Adventures Of St Bernard Carnell Software	9
58%	4/86
Affaire Vera Gruz Infogrames 85%	34/96
Afghan Attack Southern Software 6/10	15/96
Africa Gardens Gilsoft 84%	4/51
AftersheckInterceptor 98%	34/95
Agent Orange A'n' F 59%	38/23
Agent XMastertronic 85%	37 /117
Ahhh#CRL61%	9/109
Air Defence CCS	16/141
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Airbase Invader CP Software 68%	
Airline Cases Computer Simulations	40/104
Airwolf Elite 90%	13/28
Alcatraz Harry Mastertronic 43%	9/123
Alchemist Imagine 85%	2/13
Alien Argus Press	15/124
Allen 8 Ultimate 95%	15/16
Alien Evalution Greinlin Graphics 75%	42/35
Alien Highway Vortex 88%	29/23
Allen Swarm/Arena K-Tel 57%	3/108
Aliens Electric Dreams 84%	37/18
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Alphabeth A 'N F Software	16/104
AmauroteMad 92%	40/117
American Football Argus Press 71%	13/125

Android 2 Vortex 90%	2/13
Anfractuos Players 46%	39/116
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Animated Strip Poker Knightsoft 66%	15/1/8
Annals Of Romie PS\$ 85%	38/77
Antagonists The Addison Wesley 6/10	19/34
Antics Bug-Byte 90%	6/9
Apocalypse Infogrames	43/51
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Arc of Yesod Thor 89%	26/129
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Archon Ariolasoft 83%	1.8/21
Arcturus Visións 57%	3/39
Arena Bug Byte 67%	46/67
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Armageddon Silversoft 68%	1/79
Armageddon Man The Martech 65%	44/50
Army Moves Ocean 54%	41/16
Amhem CCS	17/122
Artist II The Softek International	36/133
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Ashes Pulsonic 49%	5/101
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Astroclone Hewson Consultants 88%	22/146
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ı	Astrotenor Astrocale	38/48
	Alhena Ocean 75%	45/21
ı	Athlete Buffer Micro 51%	8/100
ı	Atric Atec Ultimate 92%	1/28
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Į	Altack Of Killer Tomatoes Global 89%	
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Handicap Golf CRL 81%	4/37	41%
Happiest Days Of Your Life Firebird	54% 34 /34	It's The Wooluf Cryst
Hardball Advance 84%	34/32	Iwo Jima PSS 60%
Harry Goes Home Pulsonic 32%	5/37	Jack And The Beansta
Harvey Headbanger Firebird 80%	37/120	 Jack Charlton's Mater
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Head Coach Addictive 33%	33/114	Jack The Nipper Gren
Head Over Heels Ocean 97%	39/20	Jack The Nipper II In
Heartland Fireburd 92%	31/26	Gramlin Graphics &
Heavy On The Magick Gargoyle 9/1: Heist 2012 Firebird Silver 12%		Jackle and Wide Build
Helichopper Firebird 67%	45/129	Jail Break Konami 479
Hellfire Melbourne House 72%	18/11	Jasper Micromega 91
Helm The Firebird	14/13 18/116	Jet Set Willy Software Jet Set Willy II Software
Henry's Hoard Afternative 65%	27 /137	Jewels Of Darkness Ra
Herbert's Dummy Run Mikro-Gen 90	0% 18/116	Jewels of Babylon Inte
Here And There With The Mr Men Mi	rrorsoft 14/110	Jock And Time Rings F
Here Comes The Sun Alligata 5/10	5/76	Joe Blade Players 84%
Highlander.Ocean 57%	37/116	Jahriny Reb II Lothlori
Mighway Code CRL%	15/21	Jokers Wild Phoenix 6
Highway Encounter Vortex 95%	20/122	- Jonah Barrington's St
Hijack Electric Dreams 86%	31/115	87%
History Mystery Argus Press	18/112 37/105	Journey The Temptati
Hive Firebird 78%		Journey's End Master
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Hollow The Gilsoft		Juggernaut CRL 73%
Homicide Hotel Wallsoft 84%	15/95	Jump Unique 70%
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House Jack Built The Thor 73%	11/100	Jungle Jumble Argus F
House Of The Living Dead The Phip	ine Acennistae	Just Imagine Central 5
59%	2/38	Kai Temple Firebird 40
How To Be A Complete Bastard Vir.	ein Games	Kane Mastertronic 54
73%	45/18	Kat Trap Domark 84%
How To Be A Hero M A.D. 70%	40/111	Kayleth US Gold/Epyx
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Howzat Wyvern Software 53%	7/13	Kentilla Micromega 10
Howzat Alternative Software 11%	37 /126	Key Of Hope Games W
Hubert Blaby Computer Games 62%	10/139	Key To Time The Lump
Hulk The Adventure International 87		Klck Boxing Firbird Sil
Human Torch All American 56%	30/76	Kiddisoft Tape Magazi
Humpty Dumpty Mystery The Widgit Hunchback Ocean 66%	2/37	Kirdnap Sparklers 49%
Hunchback Adventure Ocean 86%	2/73	Killed Until Dead US Go
Hunchback II Ocean 85%	33/97 13/42	Killer Knight Phipps As
Hunter-Killer Portek 61%		Killer RingReaktor 47%
Hybrid Startight 48%	1/96 44/29	Kinetik Firebird 71%
Hydrafoo!FTL 90%	41/14	- King Arthur's Quest His - Kingdom Of Krall The N
Hypa Raid Atlantis 60%	27/24	Kings Keep Firebird Sil
Hypaball Telecomsoft 56%	37/108	Kirel Addictive 85%.
Hyper-Action Silversoft 84%	9/103	Knight Driver Hewson!
Hyperblaster Lothlorien 73%	7/51	Knight Games II Black I
Hyperbow/Mastertronic 76%	37/124	Knight Lore Ultimate 9
Hypersports Imagine 92%	19/25	Knight Rider Ocean 39'
Mysteria Software Projects 78%	45/16	Knight Tyme Mastertre
Ball Firebird 90%	39/112	Knockout Mikrogen 62
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Impassible Mission US Gold 76%	22/88
Incredible Adventure The CRL 2/10	5 /75
Incredible Shrinking Man Mastertronic 68%	28/16
Indiana Jones And The Temple Of Doon	n US Gold
PD%	46 /131
<i>Indoor Sports</i> Advance 50% <i>Interno The Ri</i> chard Shepherd Software	41/32
	8/71
Infiltrator US Gold 72%	35/149
Inheritance Infogrames 86% Inspector Flukeit Top Ten 70%	41 /65 43 /72
Insurgency CCS	12/159
Intermediate Level French Scisoft	20/83
Intermediate Level Maths Scison International Karate System 3 68%	15 /110 24 /22
Into The Eagle's Nest Pandora 82%	39/109
Invader Cube Oasis 69%	3/37
Invasion Force Micromania 84% Invasion Of The Body Snatchas!	3 /45
Crystal Computing 691/5%	1/90
It's A Knockout Ocean 39%	37/26
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Jack And The Beanstalk Thor 68%	7/92
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Leve/5 M.A.D. 53%	47/126
Leviathan English Software 52%	43/84
Lightforce FTL 91%	34/17
Lightmagic New Generation Little Computer People Activision 57%	16 /53 38 /33
Living Daylights The Domark 63%	43 /94
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Loco Alligata 44%	38/18
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una Atac Atlantis 55%	31/18
una Crabs Micromega 61 ½%	1/43
unar Jetman Ultimate 95%	1/88
unar Rescue CRL 27%	3/83
Macadam Bumper PSS 87%	21/48
Mad Nurse Firebird 31%	39/18
Madcap Manor Gilsoft 5/10	22/123
Madhaffar Gamma Software 51%	11/15
Mafia Contract Atlantis Software 7/10 Mafia Contract II Atlantis 85%	12/120
Ang Max Imagine 67%	31 /73
Magic Macmillan	42 /20
Magic Castle Gilsoft 76%	22 /30 4 /52
fagic Meanles CDS 58%	2/90
fagic Roundabout CRL 51%	12/188
fagnets Sinclair/Macmillan	5 /68
fallstrom Ocean 59%	35 /132
Malice In Wonderland Sentient 5/10 Manage Cases Computer Simulations	20 /94 40 /105
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61%	36 /186
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Nether Earth Argus Press 75% 40/ Never Ending Story Ocean 7/10 26	26 194
New Cylon Attack A & F Software 78% 12/ New Venture Falcon 78% 7/5 Nexor Design Design 81% 33/	3
Next War Assassin Software 65% 9/1 Nick Faldo's Open Argus Press 83% 20	113
Night Gunner Digital Integration 91% 3/3 Nightmare Rally Ocean 80% 34/	11 122
Nightshade Ultimate 91% 21 Ninja Mastertronic 50% 37. Ninja Hamster CRL 62% 43.	/120
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Octagon Squad Mastertronic 49% 33 Odyssey I Perfection Software 72% 1/1	/128 l2
Oligopoly Cases Computer Simulations 40	/23 /105
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Omega Run CRL 87% 2/4 Ometron Software Projects 80% 37/3 On The Run Design Design 91% 20	
One Man And His Droid Mastertronic 76% 23 One On One Anolasoft 39% 21	/164 /39 /74
Operation Stallion Wright choice 73% 41 Operation Turtle Double Play 5/10 28	/62 /92
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Paper Boy Elite 88% 33 Parabola Firebod 63% 41	/18 /15
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Pawn The Rainbird 90% 41	99 1/58 1/37
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Pi-Eyed Automata 57%	2/73
Prin Ere Automata UK 77%	11/23
Picture Logic Addison Wesley %	19/102
Pinball Wizard CPSoftware 71%	4/126
Ping Pong Imagine 90%	28/113
Pioneer Atlantis 67%	10 /140
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Piromania Automata UK 70% Pit-Stop Avalon 48%	11/16 7/46
Planetiali Argus Press Software 68%	8/101
Planetopoly Celerysoft 48%	32/83
Planets The Martech 85%	30/30
Play Your Cards Right Britannia 38%	27/18
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Plexar Mad 86% Pluggif Blaby 521/2%	1/93
Plummet/Interceptor Software 61%	12/91
Pneumatic Hammers Firebird (Silver) 18	
Podder Central Solutions 54%	31 /109
Pogo Ocean 87%	4/84
Poker Ducksoft 63%	20 /38
Pole Position Atarisoft 68% Poel CDS 77%	12/81 6/40
Popeye Dk' tronics 90%	20/72
Postman Pat's Trail Game Longman	19/102
Potty Painter Rabbit 60%	2/12
Polly Pigeon Gremlin Graphics 70%	12/38
Potty Planter Mogul 46%	4/83
Prehistoric Adventure Crusader 84%	35/69
Prefude/Anterog Central Solutions 6/10 Prepositions Options International	35/59
President Addictive House 29%	42/32
Prince The CCS	12/158
 Print Shop Cases Computer Simulations 	
Prisoner The S Preston 78%	30/78
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Prohibition Infogrames 59% Project Future Micromania 90% Project X — The Micromania 90% Prospector The Tartan (released with The Crown Of Raimh Proteus Abacus 65% Psi 5 Trading Company US Gold 58% Psi-Spy Postem 47% Proce Of Magik The Level 9 94% Psychodelia Llamasoft Psytraxx The Edge 69% Psytron Beyond 91% Pub Games Alligata 77% Pub Pud Ocean 75% Pulsator Martech 66%	43/31 14/44 0 20/95 46/104 otep) 3/116 40/31 5/61 30/75 15/20 10/20 5/8 34/154 15/32 42/33
Prohibition Infogrames 59% Project Future Micromania 90% Project X - The Microman Compass 6/1 Prospector The Tartan (released with The Crown Of Rainth Proteus Abacus 65% Psi-5 Trading Company US Gold 58% Psi-5 Trading Company US Gold 58% Psi-5 Postem 47% Price Of Magik The Level 9 94% Psychodelia Llamasoft Psytraxx The Edge 69% Psytron Beyond 91% Pub Garnes Alligata 77% Pud Pud Ocean 75% Pud Pud Ocean 75% Pud Pud Poet 10 10 10 10 10 10 10 10 10 10 10 10 10	43/31 14/44 0 20/95 46/104 otep) 3/116 40/31 6/61 30/75 15/20 10/20 5/8 34/154 15/32 42/33 2/14
Prohibition Infogrames 59% Project Future Micromania 90% Project X — The Micromania 90% Prospector The Tartan (released with The Crown Of Raimh Proteus Abacus 65% Psi 5 Trading Company US Gold 58% Psi-Spy Postem 47% Proce Of Magik The Level 9 94% Psychodelia Llamasoft Psytraxx The Edge 69% Psytron Beyond 91% Pub Games Alligata 77% Pub Pud Ocean 75% Pulsator Martech 66%	43/31 14/44 0 20/95 46/104 otep) 3/116 40/31 5/61 30/75 15/20 10/20 5/8 34/154 15/32 42/33
Prohibition Infogrames 59% Project Future Micromania 90% Project X - The Microman Compass 6/1 Prospector The Tactan {released with The Crown Of Rainh Proteus Abacus 65% Psi-Spy Postem 47% Price Of Magik TheLevel 9 94% Psychodelia Llamasoft Psytraxx The Edge 69% Psytron Beyond 91% Pub Garnes Alligata 77% Pud Pud Ocean 75% Pud Pud Ocean 75% Punchy Mr. Micro 88% Punctuation Pete Helinemann Punctuation Pete Helin MacGiobon Push Of Software Projects 85%	43/31 14/44 0 20/95 46/104 otes) 3/116 40/31 6/61 30/75 15/20 10/20 5/8 34/154 15/32 42/33 2/14 5/67 37/49 1/82
Prohibition Infogrames 59% Project Future Micromania 90% Project X - The Microman Compass 6/1 Prospector The Tartan (released with The Crown Of Rainth Proteus Abacus 65% Psi-5 Trading Company US Gold 58% Psi-5 Trading Company US Gold 58% Psi-5 Protem 47% Price Of Magik The Level 9 94% Psychodelia Llamasoft Psytraxx The Edge 69% Psytron Beyond 91% Pub Garnes Alligata 77% Pub Pub Cean 75% Pub Pub Cean 75% Pub Rainte Ch 66% Punchy Mr. Micro 88% Punctuation Pete Helmemann Pusch Off Software Projects 85% Pyjamarama Mikro-Gen 92%	43/31 14/44 0 20/95 46/104 otep) 3/116 40/31 6/61 30/75 15/20 10/20 5/8 34/154 15/32 42/33 2/14 5/67 37/49 1/82 10/9
Prohibition Infogrames 59% Project Future Micromania 90% Project X - The Microman Compass 6/1 Prospector The Tectan (released with The Crown Of Raimh Profess Abacus 65% Psi 5 Trading Company US Gold 58% Psychodelia Llamasoft Psychaecia Llamasoft Psychaecia Llamasoft Psychaecia Llamasoft Psychaecia To May 10 May 1	43/31 14/44 0 20/95 46/104 otes) 3/116 40/31 6/61 30/75 15/20 10/20 5/8 34/154 15/32 42/33 2/14 5/67 37/49 1/82 10/9 31/116
Prohibition Infogrames 59% Project Future Micromania 90% Project X - The Micromania 90% Prospector The Textain (released with The Crown Of Raimh Proteus Abacus 65% Pst 5 Trading Company US Gold 58% Pst 6 Trading Company US Gold 58% Pst 7 Postern 47% Proce Of Magik The Level 9 94% Psytrax The Edge 69% Psytrax The Edge 69% Psytrax The Edge 69% Psytrax The Edge 69% Push Push Office 175% Push Push Office 186% Psylamarama Mikro-Gen 92% Pyracurse Hewsons 90% Pyramid The Fantasy 83%	43/31 14/44 0 20/95 46/104 otes) 3/116 40/31 6/61 30/75 15/20 10/20 5/8 34/154 15/32 42/33 2/14 5/67 37/49 1/82 10/9 31/116 2/26
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Prohibition Infogrames 59% Project Future Micromania 90% Project X - The Micromania 90% Project X - The Micromania 90% Prospector The Tectan (released with The Crown Of Raimh Proteus Abacus 65% Pst 5 Trading Company US Gold 58% Pst 6 The State of 18 The Level 9 94% Psychodelia Llamasoft Psytraxx The Edge 69% Psytron Beyond 91% Pub Games Alligata 77% Pud Pud Ocean 75% Pud Pud Ocean 75% Pud Pud Ocean 75% Punchy Mr. Micro 89% Punctuation Pete Helinemann Punctuation Peter Heli	43/31 14/44 0 20/95 46/104 01e8) 3/116 40/31 6/61 30/75 15/20 10/20 5/8 34/154 15/32 42/33 2/14 5/67 37/49 1/82 10/9 31/116 2/25 18/22 17/22 22/126 42/22
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Probibition Infogrames 59% Project Future Micromania 90% Project Future Micromania 90% Project X—The Microman Compass 6/1 Prospector The Tectain (released with The Crown Of Raimh Proteus Abacus 65% Psi 5 Trading Company US Gold 58% Psi 5 Trading Company US Gold 58% Psi 50y Postern 41% Price Of Magik The Level 9 94% Psychedelia Llamasoft Psythaxx The Edge 69% Psytron Beyond 91% Pub Games Alligata 77% Pub Games Alligata 77% Pub Pub Pub Pub Games Alligata 77% Pub	43/31 14/44 0 20/95 46/104 01ep) 3/116 40/31 6/61 30/75 15/20 10/20 5/8 34/154 15/32 42/32 42/32 42/32 10/9 31/116 2/25 18/22 17/22 22/126 42/22 29/138 4/117 24/168 35/58 1/101 44/95 4/49 12/136 15/114 27/124
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Rapscallion Bug Byte 85%	7/93
Rasputin Firebird 79%	27 /138
Rasterscan Mastertronic 75%	40/118
Rais The Hodder And Stoughton 70%	21/110
Rattler Atlantis 53%	14/48
Read-Right-Away H.S.Software	44/94
Realm Of Impossibility Ariolasolt 10%	97/24
Realm Of The Undead Lothlarien 50%	27 /31 7 /11
Rebel Virgin Games 76%	44/15
Rebel Planet Adventures oft 85%	24/13
Red Arrows Database Software 52%	31/74 20/114
Red Attack Unique 49%	MAN TIN
Red L.E.D. Starlight 61%	9/123
Red Llon Mystic Software 85%	46/122
Red Moon Level 9 9/10	39/54
Red Scorpion Quicksilva 41%	20/91
Renegade Ocean 89%	41/111
Rescue On Fractalus Activision 75%	44/34
Return To Eden Level 98/10	33/123
Rature To Manage Manua 7710	11/105
Return To Ithaca Atlantis 7/10	28/93
Return To Oz US Gold 84% Revenge Of The Killer Tomatoes Visions	34/97
74%	
	6/11
Revenge On The C5 Atlantis 42%	28 /29
RevolutionVortex 91%	33/16
Riddler's Den Electric Dreams 78%	22/147
Rider Virgin Games 50%	1/42
Rille Range Mastertronic 64%	9/94
Rifts Of Time Pocket Money Software 7/1	0 28/96
Rigel's Revenge Mastertronic 88%	47/42
Ring Cl Darkness The Wintersoft 6/10 River Reid Activision 74%	9 //5
Miver Maio Activision / 4%	10/93
River Rescue Thom EMI 74%	1/30
Road Racer Thorn EMI 691/2%	1/30
Road Runner US Gold 73%	43/96
Robber Virgin Games 48%	1/100
Robin Of Shertock Silversoft 7/10	25/84
Rebin Of The Wood Odin 94%	24/10
Robot Messiah Alphabatim 72%	24/16
Robot Riot Silversoft 70%	2/100
Robot Rumpus Allantis 61%	14/47
Robot Runner Longman	2/98
Roboto Bug Byte 58%	27/133 19/40
Rocco Grernin Graphics 70%	19/40
Rock'n Wrestle Melbourne 48%	30/24
Rockford's Riot Monolith 84%	21/24 24/15
Rockman Mastertronic 69%	24/15
Rockman Alligata 57%	44/22
Rocky Horror Show The CRL 79%	18/12
Rogue Trooper Piranha 79%	36/36
Roland's Rat Race Ocean 66%	20/37
Roller Coaster Elite 94%	24/32
Roly Poly Goes to Hospital David Todd 62%	19/46
Rommel's Revenge Crystal Computing 65:	8 2 /75
UDOLLU TO CUT DSM	35/133
Roundneads Lathlonen 59%	45/103
Rubicon Bug Byte 30% Ruby Runabout Scorpio Software 6/10	43/22
Kuby Runabout Scorpio Software 6/10	10/110
NUBOY MENAGERATIC 3 LX	33/26
Run For Gold Hill MacGibbon 71%	13/10
Run Rabbit Run Hill MacGlobon	37/49
100111	
ISSUF DATES	

ISSUE DATES

ISSUE	MONTH		
1	February 1984	25	February 1986
2	March 1984	26	March 1986
а	April 1984	27	April 1986
4	May 1984	28	May 1966
6	June 1984	29	June 1966
6	July 1984	30	July 1986
7	August 1984	31	August 1988
8	September 1984	32	September 1986
9	October 1984	33	October 1986
10	November 1984	34	November 1986
11	December 1984	35	December 1986
12	January 1985	36	January 1987
13	February 1985	37	February 1987
14	March 1985	38	March 1987
15	April 1985	39	April 1987
16	May 1985	-40	May 1987
17	June 1985	41	June 1987
18	July 1985	42	July 1987
19	August 1985	43	August 1987
20	September 1985	44	September 1987
21	October 1985	45	October 1987
22	November 1985	46	November 1987
23	December 1985	47	December 1987
24	January 1986		

Runes Of Zendos The Dorcas Software	
8/10 Runestone Firebird 9/10	12 /124 25 /83
Runesione Games Workshop 9/10	17/100
Rupert And The Ice Castle Bug Byte 50%. Rupert And The Toymaker's Party Quick	32/20
54%	77/69
SAS: Operation Thunderflash Creative S 63%	parks 37 /125
SOS Visions 65% Sabateur Durell 93%	8/99
Saboteur // Dureil 83%	24/ 30 41/ 103
Sabre Wulf Ultimat Sacred Armour Of Antiriad The Palace (6/62
89%	35/18
Saga Of Eric The Viking The Mozaic 8/10 Sai Combat Mirrorsoft 81%	14/102 28/122
Sailing Activision 76%	39/17
Saimazoom Silversoft 53% Saim Fox Strip Paker Martech 72%	19 /16 28 /15
Sam Safety Argus Press Sam Spade Silversoft 57%	17/87
Sam Stoat Gremfin Graphics 58%	4/30 15/13
Samurai CR1, 69% Samurai Trilogy Gremlin Graphics 49%	39/73
Sand Scorchers Unique 46%	45 /123 7 /86
Sarimoor Atlantis 38% Satcom Atlantis 56%	30 /26 44 /106
Shugetti Junction Bug Byte 34%	32/22
Scalextric Leisure Genius 57% Sceptre Of Bagdad Atlantis 75%	38/32 40/18
Science Argus Press Scooby Doo Elite 91%	19/104
Scrabble De Luxe Leisure Genius 62%	33/31 47/13
Screenplay Macmillan Scuba Dive Durell 92%	24 739 2 788
Sea Battles Atlantis 60%	15/31
Seabase Delta Firebird 74% Seas Of Blood Fighting Fantasy 7/10	30 /78 24 /164
Secret Diary Of Adrian Mole Mozaic/Lev 86%	ef 9
Secret Of Levitation Americana 45%	23 /50 29 /128
Secret 01St. Bride's The St. Bride's 5/10 See-Kaa 01 Assiah Mastervision 5/10	21 /108 14 /102
Sentinel The Firebiro 97% Serpent Fron Hell Scorpio 3/10	40/20
Sets Afghanius Educational Soft	16 /118 44 /95
Seventh Cavalry Black Knight 65% Shadow Of The Unicom Mikro Gen 7/10	22/140
Shedow Skimmer The Edge 62%	24 /154 39 /25
Shadowfire Beyond 96% Shadows Of Mordor Melbourne House 93'	17/16
Shake Keep Publishing 26%	42/26
Shap-Lin's Road The Edge 67% Sheer Panic Visions 63%	37 /34 4 /11
Sherlock Melbourne House 8/10 Shipwreck/Castle Eerie Tartan 82%	9 /70
shockway Rider FTL 67%	41 /61 38 /114
Short Circuit Ocean 71% Show Jump IMS Software 64%	40/32 9/18
Show Jumping Alligata 70%	27/132
Shrewsbury Key Players 68% Shuttle Sheck Software Savers 62%	36/151 13/11
lidewize Firebird (Gold) 50% lidney Affair The Inlogrames 86%	44/103
hema Seven Durell 62%	40 /50 39 /110
lifent Service MicroProse 80% Fr Fred Mikro-Gen 91%	38 /79 26 /122
ir Lancelot Melbourne House 90%	11/44
ki Star 2000 Richard Shepherd 75% koof Daze Microsphere 93%	14/120 11/10
kull Games Machine 70% ky Fex Ariolasoft 84%	3/28 27/29
kv Ranger Microsobere 7 1%	12 /82
ky Runner Cascade 64% lap Fight Imagine 72%	39 /108 43 /20
lingshot The Power House 34% mash Out/Pirate Software 11%	44/18
raffle Longman 75%	46 /133 16 /32
napple Hopper Macmillan nodgits Sparklers 77%	20 /84 30 /20
now Queen The St Brides 7/10	23/122
nowball Level 9 Computing 9/10 nowman The Quicksilva 78%	6 /73 3 /82
odov The Sorceror Bug Byte 74% oft & Cuddly The Power House 55%	27/132
oft Solid 3D Ant Attack 85%	44 /108 1 /18
oftware Star Addictive 64%	15/119

Solar System The Eaglesofy	8 KC / NO
Solamon's Key US Gold 78%	15/48 45/133
Son Of Blagger Alligata 61%	13/22
Sorcerer Of Claymorgue Castle The Adv	renture Inte
national //10	12/126
Sorcery Virgin Games 72%	4/91
Sorderon's Shadow Beyond 7/10	23/119
Soul Of A Robot Mastertronic 75%	25 /114
Souls Oi Darkon Taskset 7/10	24/156
Southern Belle Hewson Consultants 84%	
Space Art Eclipse Software	9/102
Space Command Vitgin Games 63% Space Detective Celerysoft 43%	6/109
Space Harrier Elite 77%	30/77 36/28
Space Professor Front Runner 73%	11/150
Space ScartMacmillan	15/48
Space-Shuttle Microdeal 55%	4 / 125
Space Shuttle Activision 78%.	197106
Space Station Zebra Beyond Software 35	
Spaced Out Firebird (Silver) 38% Special Agent Helnemann	43/15
Special Delivery Creative Sparks 71%	2/98
Special Operations M C Lothlorien 6/10	11/[42 9/69
Spectipede Mastertronics 78%	8/45
Spectrealm Runesoft 74%	7/44
Spectron Virgin Games 76%	1/18
Spectrum Safari CDS 65%	5/90
Specture Xorsoft	16/60
Speed Duef DK Tronics 56% Speed King 2 Mastertronic 42%	2/100
Spelibound Beyond 52%	36 / 188
Spellbound Mastertronic 95%	6/52 24 /26
Spellbound Besieged Suits Software	5766
Spider-Man Adventure International 8/10	14/98
Spike Firebird 61%	23/31
Spiky Harold Firebird 65%	29/31
Spinglary Electric Dreams 93%	29/16
Spittire 40 Mirrorsoft 90%	26/34
Splat Incentive Software 811/2% Splitting Personalizes Domark 90%	1 /88.
SpoofRunesoft 6/10	30/18
Sport Of Kings Mastertronic 53%	8 /74 31 /108
Spy HunterUS Gold B9%	16/130
Spy Trilogy Tarten 7 / 10	29/91
Spy Vs Spy Beyond 93%	19/24
Spy Vs Spy The Island Caper Databyte 53%	41/22
Spyplane Gilsoft 55% Squirt David Todd 51%	4 /52
St. Crippens Creative Snarks 72%	25 /14 20 /22
Staff Of Zaránol The CCS 6/10	12/122
Stage-Coach Creative Snarks 79%	8/102
Stainless Steel Mikro-Gen 89%	32/18
Star Firebirds Insight 73%	21/22
Star Gazer Eclipse	16/21
Star Raiders II Electric Dreams 52% Star Runner Code Masters 50%	40/113
Star Seeker Mirrorsoft 38%	41/31 47/38
Star Trade Digital Dextenty 55%	3/52
Star Trader Bug Evte 66%	7/36
Star Warrior Visions 68%	4 /39
Star Wreck Alternative 73%	44/68
Starbike Thie Edge 77% Starbiitz Softek 88%	10/148
	3/23
Starclash Micromaga 69% Startox Reaktor 77%	2/104 43/90
targlider Rainbird 95% (128 version 97%)	36 /22
itarion Melbourne House 94%	16/18
itarquake Bubble Bus 96%	22/10
tarsphere Eclipse	15/48
tarstrike Realtime 93%	11/20
itarstrike // Realtime 96%	28/20
itay Kool Bug Byte 59% Iteve Davis Snooker CDS 77%	15/41
itiffip & Go Novagen 90%	12/187
tonkers Imagine 78%	44 /102 2 /102
top The Express Sinclair 80%	6/49
form Mastertronic 44%	34/20
termbringer M.A.Q. 86%	42/15
(rangeloop Virgin Games 85%	9/101
treaker Buildog 38% treet Hawk Ocean 68%	44/30
trike M.A.D. 40%	34/31
Inke Attack 2 Micro Mart 47%	41 /26 10 /147
trike Force Cobra Piranha 83%	33/28
trike Force Harrier Mirrorsoft 83%	33/120
Irantium Dog Outeksilva 42%	13/122
ub Chase Gem Software 481/3%	1/35
ub Sundr-Firebird 75%	18/102



Subhunter Micro Mart 58%	10/150
Submarine Strike Pulsonic (Warwick Leisur 49%	re) 5 /19
Subtarranean Nightmare US Gold 56%	31 /15
Subterranean Stryker Insight 62%	14/24
Suicide Island Dollar Soft 2/10	9/68 32 /24
Summer Santa Alpha Omega 31% Sun Star CRL 30%	45 /13!
Sunflower Number Show The Macmillan	21/91
Super Brat Atlantis 72%	20/40
Super Cycle US Gold/Epyx 63% Super G-Man Code Masters 43%	37 /33 43 /91
Super Mutt Silversoft 83%	10/22
Super Pipeline 2Taskset 79%	18/114
Super Robin Hood Code Masters 52%	41/24
Super Sam Budgie 42% Super Soccer Imagine 56%	21 /40 37 /112
Superbowl Ocean 85%	29/34
Superchess 3.5 Deep Thought/CP Softwar	
85%	16/29
Supercom Atlantis 21% Supergram Tynesoft 43%	28/24 18/40
Supernova Players 65%	46/130
SuperpowerCCS	40/105
and Comment of the	14/126 2/15
Supergnails Games Machine 63% Supersprint Electric Dreams 58%	46/137
Sudehamp New Concepts 64%	27/125
Survivar US: Gold 70%	44/21
Survivors Atlantis 70% Sweevo's World Gargoyle 95%	37 /122 25 /28
Swords And Sorcery PSS 9/10	24 /162
Swords Of Bane CCS 77%	35/125
System 15000 AVS 7/10	16/117
YLL Vortex 81% TTRacer Digital 78%	7/15 34/26
Table Football Budgie 28%	43/29
Tai-Pan(for 128 only) Ocean 93%	43/24
Tales of the Arabian Nights Interceptor 55% Talisman Games Workshop 7/10	1 8 /14 1 6 /116
Talos Silversoft 60%	20/115
Tangled Tale A Pocket Money Software	24/110
8/10%	21/109
Tank Trax Mastertronics 51% Tantalus Quicksilva 76%	3 /43' 29 /127
Tantalus Quicisnya 76%	17/20
The state of the s	

Tarzan Martech 73%	36/181
Tasword Two The Word Processor	5/126
Tasman Software Tau Ceti CRL 94%	23/86
Taction on 1946 Technician Ted Hewson Consultants 96%	13/16
Tempest Electric Dreams 62%	38/26
Temple Of Terror Atlantis 7/10	27/74
Temple Of Terror US Gold 81%	42/60
Temple Of Vran Incentive Software 8/10	5/74
Ten Pack Automata	22/32
Ten Pin Challenge Atlantis 26%	44/23
Tenth Frame US Gold 55%	38/30
Terminus Mastertronic 52%	36/188
Terra Cognita Code Masters 71%	35/34
Terra Cresta Imagine 81%	37/23
Terra Force Firebird 40%	13/124
Terra-Hawks CRL 59%	9/110
Ferror Of The Deep Mirrorsoft 44%	39/122
Terrormolinas Melbourne House 9/10	23/117
Terrors Of Trantoss The Ariolasoft 8/10	29/89
Thanatos Durell 93%	35/152
That's The Spirit The Edge 82%	20/26
Theatre Europe PS\$ 84%	30/54
Their Finest Hour Century 95%	26/118
Theory Of Music To Grade 5 Tao Kirk	37/49
Therbo Arcade Software 71%	12/40 36/30
They Call Me Trooper CRL 46%	
They Say The World Will Die In Fire & I	ce rietur
Software 77%	4/92
They Stale A Million 39 Steps 85%	36/16
Thing Bounces Back Gremlin Graphics 85%	
Thingy And Doodah's Americana 39%	34/20
Think! Aridiasoft 82%	27/22
Thinker The Atlantis 79%	15/12
Three Weeks in Paradise Mikro-Gen 93%	26/138
Throne Of Fire Melbourne House 75%	40/112
Through the Trap Door Piranha 70%	47/12
Thrust Firebird 76%	34/149
Thrust If Firebird 48%	40 / 33
Thrusta Software Projects 73%	2/39
Thundercats Efite 91%	46/22
Thunderbirds Firebird 64%	23/20
Thunderceptor GO! 64%	46/140
(released with The Fast And The Furio	WS)
Thunderhawk Lyversoft 43%	4/29

Tire Interceptor Micros 57% Time AVP Computing Time Flight The Power House 29% Time Machine The Digital Faritasia 75% Time Quest Scorpto 6/10 Time Spacitusey Lothforten 6/10 Time Traveller Sulls Software Time Avenue Annotation Sulls Tobruk PSS 65% Tomahawk Digital Integration 93% Tomb Of Syrinx The Power House 26% Top Gun Ocean 90% Touchstones Of Rhiennon The Adventur	11/59 35/58 40/17 4/28 25/81 27/73 5/65 34/36 16/24 3/123 18/101 11/52 5/11 31/22 40/101 23/12 40/22 37/20 a Internat-
onal 9/10 Flower Of Despair Games Workshop 8/10% Flower Of Evil Creative Sparks 87% Floy Bizarre Activision 65% Frailing Game Reelax 23% Frailing Game Reelax 23% Frailing Game Reelax 23% Frailing Game Game Game Game Game Game Game Game	21/107 11/114 4/118 15/24 25/109 34/150
Travels With Trashman New Generation 11%. Traxx Quicksilva/Salamander 61%. Triad Amba Software 55%. Trian Game The Microsphere 75½%. Triaxos Aroidasoft 53%. Tribble Trouble Software Projects 91%. Tribble Trouble Software Projects 91%. Trib Silicon Joy 47%. Trib Elite 70%. Triplex Workforce 66%. Tripods The Redshift 4/10. Trival Pursuit Question Packs 1 & 2.	11/54 1 /101 2/75 1/92 42/25 4/9 31/110 13/123 43/18 3 /118 15/102
Tube The Quicksiva 47% Tujad Ariolasoft 69% Turbo Esprit Durell 38% Turmof Bug Byte 90% Turntaking The Learning Process Turtle Timewarp Perfection Software 72% Tutanksmun Micromania 71 V/% Twice Shy Mosaic 90% Twin Kingdom Valley Bug Byte 8/10	1/35 35/67 11/108
Twister System 3.71% Two Gun Turtle M.C. Lothlomen 7.3% U.C.M. M.A.D. 8.7% Uch Mata-Martech 36% Ugh Softek 6.1% Ultima Ratio Finebord (Silver) 3.4% United CCS 5.3% United CCS 5.3% United State Masterizonic 8.3% Valuation Legend 8.1% Valuation Legend 8.1%	26/18 4/29 47/128 39/114 7 /14 43 /29 12/17 7/45 33/126 3/38 35/20 29/26 9/11 1/41
Valkyne 1 ÅRam Jam Corporation 8/10 Vampire Code Maslers 51% Vampire Village Terminal 63½% Vectron Insight 92% Vegetable Grash Kuma Computers 63% Verligo Unique 69% Verligo Unique 69% Verly Big Cave Adventure CRL 82% Video Poker Mastertronic 35% Video Poid CCP 69% View To A Kill A Domark 76% village Underworld Orpheus 7/10	11/110 35/37 1/92 24/36 5/100 9/111 32/64 34/132 15/14 18/19 15/98

l	Virus Orange Software 62% Voidninner Mad 54% Voicanic Planef Thom EMI 69% Voicano Computer Magic 45% Voyage Into The Unknown Masterironic	7/88 43/23 1/34 12/80
ı	9/10	8/12
Į	VulcanCCS 94%.	39/72
1	W.A.R. Martech 68%	35/148
ı	Wally Kong Calisto 63%	5/34
ı	Wanted:Monty Mole Gremlin Graphics 92%	9/8
ı	War 70 CCS	10/134
1	Wair Cars (Construction Set) Firebird 53%	46/139
į	War Of The Worlds CRL 46%	7/44
ı	Warlack Of Firetop Mountain The Puffin Bi	ooks 1/12
ı	Warlords Interceptor Micros-7/10	20/92
ı	Warriors Revenge Video Force 3/10	8/73
ı	Warzone CCS	12/160
l	Waterloo Lethlonen 92%	23/138
ļ	Waxworks Digital Fantasia 7/10	6/77
i	Way Of The Exploding fist The Melbourne	
ı	92%	21/12
I	Way Of The Tiger Crenilin 93%	28/117
ı	Wavdor MS 8/10	9/67
ı	Wender Bender Renks High 78%	18/38
ı	West Bank Gremlin 84%	25/12
ı	Wheelra Microsphere 93%	2/25
I	White Heat Code Masters 17%	46/123
ı	Whizz Kld Unique 45%	7/38
1	Whizz Quiz Argus Press	17/86
I	Who Dares Wins II Alligata 73%	28/30
I	Who-Dunnit CCS 53%	9/92
E	Wibstars A'n'F 35%	38/99
A		

Wild West Hero Timescape 82%	1/83
Willred The Hairy Olef The Hungry! Micro	oyte
16%	5/82
William Wobbler Wizard 59%	26/31
Winged Warlards CDS Systems 79%	3/116
Winter Games US Gold 93%	26/133
Winter Sports Electric 43%	27 /12
Winter Wenderland Incentive 89%	38/97
Witch's Gauldron Mikro-Gen 10/10	17/97
Wiz Melbourne House 38%	42/32
Wizard's Lair Bubble Bus 94%	14/34
Wizard's Warrior Crusader 84%	47/41
Wizball Ocean 92%	45/22
Wolfan Bulldog 47%	43/93
Wonder Boy Activision 43%	43/82
Words And Pictures Chalksoft	44/95
World Cup Camival US Gold 26%	30/14
World Gup Football Artic Computing 71%	7/87
World Games US Gold/Envy 71%	40/126
World Globe Ecilpse Software	12/186
World Series Beseball Imagine 91%	16/38
World Series Baskethall Imagine Rt %	23/35
Worlds At War Esteem More Than Equal	and of
39%	11/149
Worldwise: Nuclear War Richardson	TTITAD
Institute	18/111
Worm Attack Pulsonic, 42%	5/99
Worm in Paradise The Level 99/10	26/91
Worse Things Happen At Sea Silversoft 91%	E/9
Wrath Of Magra The Master Vision 5/10	10/116
Wreckage Unique 58%	9/125
Wriggler Romantic Robot 90%	15/44
Contract Con	A-01/444
and the	

XO-Word and Anagrams Azed 64% Xarq Electric Dreams 59% Xarqor PSS 71% Xecutor Ace 84% Xen Sparklers 64% Xeno A'n' F86% Xevous US Gold 64% Xor Logotron 58% Yabba Dabba Doo Quicksilva 81%	27 /30 32/30 13/46 45/134 39/118 35/27 37/104 46/23 26/17
Yacht Race Hill MacGibbon	15/112
Yankee CCS 87%	42/72
Yes Prime Minister Mosalc 56%	46/137
Yie Ar Kung Fullmagine 92%	25/26
Yie Ar Kung Fu III magine 48%	37/35
Yogi Bear Piranha 62%	47 /122
Young Ones Orpheus 42%	29/128
ZRino 44%	44/24
Zapper Anco Software 64%	8/11
Zaxxan Starzone 74%	1/13
Zaxxon US Gold 58%	14/30
Zenji Activision 53% Zig Zeg DK Tronics 85%	10/149
Zipper Flipper Sinclair 60%	5/18
Zolds Martech 96%	6 /59
Zombie Zombie Spaceman/Quicksilve 80%	25/16
Zone 00 Allanson 45%	13/46
Zoot Bug Byte 59%	23/20
Zorro US Gold 53%	25/32
Zub Mastertronic 79%	36/176
Zulu Wars CCS 61%	41/88
Żynaps Hewson 91%	42/14
Zythum Mirrorsoft 5.9%	33/38
Zzzz Mastertronic 58%	22/07





August 1987 Issue No. 43

Released on July 30th

Another favourite Frey subject - Fred Astatre films. Plans for a lawsh and largely monochrome Assaire cover had been formulated ages before but never carried out. When the great Hollywood star died Oliver insisted on dedicating the issue of CRASH to him, and featuring him with his most famous partner, Guyer Rogers, on the cover. The other elements, dancing on a newly-arrived Spectrum +3, were the issue's lead games: Tai-Pan, Micronaut One, Exolon and The Big Sleaze. It was another compilation cover, a style for which Oliver has become justifiably

The Fred Astaire cover found an echo on page 63, detailing the results of the 1987 CRASHtionnaire, where his face (and Ginger Rogers's) appeared at the foot of a reproduced Radio Times page. That was to illustrate the CRASHtionnaire's findings on your TV viewing habits, but it was a good example of the kind of detail the art department has to consider when laying out. In recent months everyone on the team had become more aware of the value of cross-referencing items within an issue, and even a tiny item like the Astaire

picture can add to the enjoyment of reading a magazine.

Our big thrill (well, there were two really) was the new Spectrum + 3 with its Amstrad-style disk drive. The reviewers weren't particularly impressed, largely because it was nothing more than a 128K with a disk drive instead of a datacorder, and also because there were no really good games available on the disks yet. Simon N Goodwin wasn't raving either, though he considered the machine professionally-made and well-documented, because he felt you could upgrade with better disk systems than the one Amstrad provided. Software houses were cautious about releasing disk games for a machine which nobody had bought yet, too, as one of CRASH's increasingly common in-depth news features reported. And there was the price - £249 was far too high. We all suspected Amstrad of hiking it so as not to ruin +2 high-street sales - a cynical supposition which would be proved all too true within a few months.

The other thrill was the arrival of Hewson's Uzi pump-action water pistols - prizes for the Exolon competition. Naturally they had to be tried out, and anyway, we needed photographs for the competition page. Richard, Roger, Robin and Skippy went out dry and came back soaked. Fortunately, as the picture showed, it was a hot day. Several innocent bystanders got squirted, including Markie Kendrick from art. His David Sylvian-style hairdo was ruined, so he sulked, which resulted in the little remark from the comps minion. But we all forgot;

art always has the last laugh.

Tie-ins fared pretty badly; The Living Daylights, Challenge Of The Gobots, Road Runner, Flash Gordon, all did from bad to average, only Ocean's delayed Tai-Pan - and then only on

the 128 - got anywhere, and that got a Smash.

Meanwhile, another of those news features focused on The Bug and its arguments with the software industry - the first sign of CRASH's reborn interest in fanzines, that was to show

itself in a renovated Fanzine File.

During the latter part of the schedule, THE GAMES MACHINE got under way, and Graeme Kidd got his portfolio back as its Co-Editor. His other half turned out to be none other than Gary Penn, who had decided that he would like to work on the new magazine (Ciarán Brennan had taken over ZZAP!). They set themselves up in Gravel Hill, using the offices not long before vacated by LM. TGM - as it became known - was going to cover more than just computers, and one of the first articles written was a comparison of laser-tag systems. Suddenly the water pistols had a rival as numerous different electronic guns began to appear. It was not, of course, very conducive to hard work in the CRASH offices to know others were zapping each other (or 'testing') nearby, but somehow we managed to keep our reviewers' minds on their own games.





September 1987 Issue No. 44

Released on August 27th

When he saw the preview copy of Ocean's Renegade, Oliver immediately said he wanted to do a cover of it when the review copy arrived. It was back to the single, powerful image, not unlike the notorious Batharian cover, but with more restraint?

It was rumaired that Roger Kean posed for Polaroid shots from which Oliver modelled the figure, and while Roger's undoubled to the figure, and while Roger's undoubled to the figure. believed that Oliver hadn't added considerably to the street fighter's physique to make it one of the best figure pictures he had done

In two respects, this was a momentous issue. Once again the CRASH reviews underwent a change after much discussion. We had dropped the Value For Money rating with the July issue, largely because of the plathora of budget games. It had seemed to us impossible to continue calculating value for money in any meaningful way when games at £2 and £10 were considered as the same product. Also, some readers had more money than others, making an arbitrary measure of value for money meaningless. Actually, this move brought the CRASH ratings more into line with Roger Kean's original concept for reviews - that the reader should make the decision about the worth of a game after having read everything the reviewers had to say about it.

Now the Comments box was tweaked: Control Keys was dropped (the days when they made a significant difference to playability were over with universal joysticks and definablekeys options), Skill Levels was dropped in favour of a new Options line which also included details on definable keys, two-player modes and so on, Use Of Colour was merged with Graphics to make the comment more logical; but perhaps the most notable addition was that of each reviewer's Overall percentage, which explained more clearly how a game's Overall rating was arrived at.

And then there was the very first ever CRASH Challenge. ZZAP! had run reader/reviewer challenges since it started, and while they were fun to do, they were always a beast to organise. AMTIX! also had a challenge, so the pressure to include one in CRASH had been there for some time. We resisted the temptation easily enough seeing the other magazines struggling to get theirs sorted our each month. But the recent CRASHtionnaire had forced our hands without doubt. Too many readers wanted a CRASH Challenge for the magazine to refuse it.

In addition to the organisational problems (finding the time, inevitably a Saturday; getting the challenger to Ludlow; finding someone to take photos), there was always that nagging feeling in the reviewers' minds that they didn't want to make prats of themselves by losing to a mere reader. However, by dint of moral pressure, Barnaby persuaded Paul Sumner to go first - he's such a natural leader of men, it was argued, that if he did it, the others would feel hound to - and duly he met Mark Turford from Wednesbury on a Saturday afternoon, and just as duly, he lost. They played Mikie as Nick Roberts sat with pad and pen in hand to record this historic defeat. It was ignominy after the ZZAP! Challenge, where Julian Rignall won month after month till people began to think he was Jeff Minter.

Perhaps not quite so earthshattering, but much sillier still, was the arrival in CRASH of Markie Kendrick's King Grub, star of LM, T-shirts and . . . now the strip. Mark had created the character for LM, but when the magazine closed he refused to stop drawing the darned thing and eventually Roger was forced to give way and make room.

Advance planning for THE GAMES MACHINE resulted in a brochure for would-be advertisers, and in slightly modified form it appeared in the centre of this issue. Historically speaking, the most interesting aspect is the two serious-looking figures in the middle wielding laser guns. The man on the left was, of course, ZZAP!'s Julian Rignall, but few realised that the lass on the right was Glenys Powell, CRASH and ZZAP!'s Editorial Assistant, and, more importantly, Julian's fiancée.

And THE GAMES MACHINE was about to make history itself, with its press date shortly after this CRASH.





CRASH HISTORY No. 1

In words and covers

TO CELL CUE TO COMPAT SCHOOL arcade machine and a wall malls as spills action day out with MIRRORSOFT

October 1987 Issue No. 45

Released on September 24th

This cover bore the CRASH Sampler cassette. Often cover mounts simply obscure the arresork underneath, but Oliver had always argued that if we did one, the mounted object would have to blend in as much as possible. The image itself could be anything, but there wasn't room for a full-blown painting based on the issue's contents; it was Roger who suggested returning to the monster that adorned the cover of issue I, only closer up, and have it hold the cussette in its classes. Oliver obliged with activic light and machine-oiled fangs. It is fascinating to hold up the two covers and compare them.

The reference to CRASHes past on the cover was not entirely inadvertent. It already seems an age of its own now, but this was the first issue in which I began recalling the CRASH History of four years. And once again Roger Kean was on the move - well, almost, for he became Editorial Director of the three computer titles, while Barnaby Page became Managing Editor of CRASH. It wasn't much change for CRASH, where Barnaby had been running large sections of the magazine for some months anyway, but the simple change in titles was a sign of the year's third upheaval at Newsfield.

It would be wrong to publish many of the confidential details, so suffice it to say that there were serious problems with the way THE GAMES MACHINE was run by its two editors (fortunately, they didn't show in the finished product), and shortly after the completion of its first issue Graeme Kidd and Gary Penn were asked to leave the company. That didn't cause any catastrophes itself, but when ZZAP! Editor Ciarán Brennan decided a few days later to leave Ludlow and return to London a reshuffle was essential. Roger Kean assumed Graeme Kidd's role of general overseer, which job he had been effectively doing for several months at King Street anyway; Barnaby took over CRASH, Julian Rignall became Managing Editor of ZZAP!; and Dominic Handy became a full-time Staff Writer at CRASH.

A few weeks after all these changes, Newsfield left for the annual shebang at Olympia, the tenth PCW Show, where all the company's upheavals were soon subsumed under the chaos of meetings with software houses, signing autographs, selling CRASH T-shirts and fighting a spirited sticker war against Your Sinclair. In fact the only long-term casualty of Newsfield's internal changes was Fear & Loathing; John Minson, who had been a personal friend of the dismissed Graeme Kidd, was no longer happy with writing for CRASH

However, a new writer and a new section arrived. Paul Evans, a CRASH reader from Liverpool, had written to Barnaby asking if he might try doing a column for CRASH on modern communications. The magazine's policy had always been to give anyone a try - and it had often had useful results - so Paul's column started in this issue, and soon became a regular feature.

Et Al also made its debut, the video section having transformed itself into this motley collection of videos, books, games and offbeat little snippets.

And as for the games . . . given the general mood at the time, one could be forgiven for thinking that Virgin's How To Be A Complete Bastard might have been made a Smash, but in fact the real problem with it was describing it in the magazine, given the language used in the game. I thought the review was as tasteful as could be, but we still got letters complaining, and even a notification from the Press Council about parental complaints. Sometimes you can't even call a spade a trowel.





November 1987 Issue No. 46

Released on October 29th

The CRASH History created echoes everywhere. Issue 1's cover had seen its latter-day counterpart in October, and now in November the King Kong cover of Issue 2 rebounded in the illustration for Activision's Rampage, previoused that month (and indeed the painting from Issue 2 was used in the competition inside). The vision of gigantic destruction was reminiscent of the covers for the Fleetway War Picture Library series that Oliver used to paint in the Seventies. Note how the angle of the skysoraper leads the eye straight to the announcement of the 3-D section, just as intended.

The hectic days of The PCW Show were over - for everyone except the writers, still working on a seven-page news section which took stock of the software world as seen at Olympia. And back in Ludlow, the show went on. Barnaby's editorial informed us of yet another Ludlow College reviewer joining the ranks, which made up for the loss of Gareth Adams, who had moved away. Bym Welthy (an unlikely name), Barnaby told us, had first contributed to CRASH around the end of 1984 (the mention of Issue 3 was an error), having turned up then as a friend of Ben Stone's - to the inevitable greeting of 'Bym and Ben, the flowerpot men'. Back in those days he'd undergone the CRASH initiation ordeal, being photographed for CRASH T-shirt ads. And though it was a long gap till this month when his familiar red head of hair reappeared, he was excused modelling T-shirts again.

This was our special 3-D issue, the one with the free red-and-green glasses inside, and what fun it had been for the Art Department. When the 3-D special was first conceived two months earlier, the notion had been to do what all magazines do: buy the spectacles from the specialist company that made them, and send the artwork to be turned into 3-D to one of the two repro houses in Britain which specialise in 3-D techniques. It was only afterwards, when plans to have loads of illustrations and text in 3-D were well under way, that it was discovered that

the cost of three-dimensionalising was approximately £400 per drawing!

Roger Kean decided we could do the work in-house. All we had to do, apparently (1), was discover what it was the specialists did. Roger and Markie Kendrick pored over 3-D comics (of which Markie has a big collection), and figured it out. The problem, though, was being able to proof the result so it could be looked at through the spectacles to see if it had worked properly. This was achieved through use of a special colour proofing system used in film planning to check complicated colour pages. The proofed drawings came out in process magenta and process yellow/cyan (to make green), and were not quite the colours used to print the pages, but close enough.

A scream of 'Eurekai' from film planning brought the entire building crowding into the room to peer through the spectacles in wonder. Throughout the following days it became a habit to leap up or downstairs as each new masterpiece was proofed, each getting more ambitious. The CRASH Charts, for instance, had eleven planes of depth to them, and the whole issue represented weeks of painstaking cutting, repasting and adjusting to get the

In the foom next to film planning, Oliver Frey was setting up his new editorial department for THE GAMES MACHINE. It had been moved from Gravel Hill because of problems with screen photography, and also to keep all the editorial staff together. Downstairs in the CRASH room, Nick Roberts got the job he had originally written in for, compiling the Playing Tips; and another new face slipped quietly in to join Barnaby, Dominic and Ian Phillipson. David Peters was to meet the urgent need for a Subeditor to plough through the dozens of thousands of words which each CRASH contains, correcting and trimming where necessary. Meanwhile, Ben Stone moved to continue his training at another magazine in the area, What's On In Shropshire, though he continued to come into CRASH several times a week





December 1987 Issue No. 47

Released on November 26th

When you're wandering around a newsagent's, what grabs the attention is a cover with a striking design or image. In taking Incentive's Freescape game Driller as o cover theme, Oliver gave himself a problem: to make it obvious what the painting was about, it had to contain recognisable elements from the game or the adverts, yet those were not action- ched. Driller being a nor condition game and of course much of Driller's power came from its peculiar 3-D graphies, which would he hard to recreate without straight copying. So he opted for the fish-eye lens image, a neat notion which wraps virtually 360° of vieto into one picture.

Judge Death also appeared on the cover, drawing attention to the 16-page supplement inside the issue. This had been set up in conjunction with Piranha, to tie in with their Judge Death licensed game, after their interest in the OINK! supplement.

It was generally agreed that something from 2000AD would be even more likely to involve CRASH and ZZAP!'s readers than OINK!. 2000AD's publishers were unwilling to participate - the title had just been bought by Robert Maxwell's BMPC group - but Titan Books, who held rights not to the 2000AD characters themselves but to all the printed stories and artwork, were about to launch a Judge Anderson reprint series and were liaising with Piranha on the game of Judge Death. Titan were persuaded to contribute the supplement artwork, in colour.

The 2000AD stories were in black and white, so the supplement in colour in CRASH and ZZAP! was something of a novelty. Titan's artist took the original pages, shot them to film to make a black-and-white image, then photocopied each page by a special process which rendered the image in a very pale blue. This gave him a design which he could colour in, the blue photocopy barely registering. The coloured pages were then sent to us together with the monochrome film, and we had the colour laser-scanned to provide the necessary four-colour separations. We combined them with the Titan's monochrome film, and suddenly, there was Judge Death in full colour.

Apart from the supplement - which prevented the third part of this CRASH History going in the issue, because there weren't enough pages to fit them both in as well as all the usual content of CRASH - and the background feature on 2000AD and Titan Books, this CRASH had the first half of Robin Candy's huge feature on tie-ins. It was an appropriate time to examine the growth of tie-ins over four years; licences seemed to be growing ever more important, and CRASH was in retrospective mood anyway.





January 1988 Issue No. 48

Released on December 17th This was our fourth Christmas cover, and the conflict between a seasonal picture and the decision to feature a particular game was a problem. On the other hand, in a year of violent games, Pac-Land at least offered a more peaceful theme. I confess a disadvantage: as I write this, the painting hasn't been done, but the idea is to have loads of Pacs playing about in the snow and so the result when we see it.

It is now almost exactly four years to the day that Roger Kean, Matthew Uffindell and myself sat around the only two typewriters we possessed, staring at blank sheets of paper, wondering what it was Spectrum-owners wanted to read, trying to conceive of the first edition of CRASH. I am not sure whether the three of us harboured ambitions of seeing the company grow; probably, but magazines are organic things, and somehow they grow of their own accord.

Newsfield was six people then: Roger, Oliver and Franco Frey, Matthew, Denise Roberts and myself part-time. At the moment of greatest growth (in terms of personnel), when LM was launched, it employed 60 full-time staff, also using eight college-age reviewers and some 30 regular contributors. Today there are just 34 full-time staff. It is a much slimmer operation, but also a much more streamlined and effective one.

We have seen Sir Clive Sinclair's 'toy' computer become the best seller in Britain, enjoying unrivalled software support from games which have ranged from utter drivel to demonstrations of the kind of skills that even mainframe programmers would envy. Recently we saw the 8-bit market start to falter as budget-priced games took hold and unit sales fell; this has particularly hit the Spectrum, yet the games are still being produced and we are always capable of being surprised by some new piece of cleverness. And despite the much discussed fall-off of sales generally, Spectrum magazines continue to ride high. The 'Shropshire fanzine' of early 1984 attained the highest sales in Britain of any computer magazine – and at one point the highest worldwide sales of any British computer magazine – and is still the market leader, along with its sister publication ZZAP!

It is difficult to predict what the next four years will bring, but you can be sure that CRASH will aim to be the best, whatever the incidental difficulties; as I write this, upstairs in the Art Department Markie Kendrick and his fellow designer Wayne Allen are laying out the Christmas Specials of CRASH and ZZAP!. We thought it would be a tough task for three, but unexpectedly just two people are doing it, because Art Director Gordon Druce has recently decided to leave. By the time you read this, however, you will know they succeeded nonetheless.

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Have an enjoyable Christmas and see you next year.

At the conclusion of this history, I thought it would be appropriate to give a credit to some of the people who, either in the functight or behind the scenes, have helped make CRASH through the years. In niphabetical order:

Gareth Adams, Wayne Alleny Kun Andersen, Jon Bates, Michael Backer, Ciarra Bornian, Derok Brewster, Robin Caady, Sebastian Clate, Suc Collett, Ian Graig, Tim Croton, Mel Crowcher, Karl Gowdale, Gordon Druce, Richard Eddy, Paul Evans, Tony Planagan, Franco Frey, Oliver Frey, Kelvin Gosarell, Simon N Goodwin, Dominic Handy, Dave Hawkes, Philippa Irving, Brendon Kavanagh, Roger Kean, Markie Kendrick, Graeme Kied, Carol Kiassy, David Lester, Gery Liddon, Tony Lorton, Frat Mable, Rosetta Macleod, Scan Maxicsson, John Musson, Sally Niewman, Nick Orchard, Lee Paddon, Barnaby Page, Michael Parkinson, Chris Passey, David Peters, Mark Peters, Ian Phillipsen, Cameron Pound, Glenys Powell, John Richardson, Johnshan Rignall, Julien Rignall, Denise Roberts, Nick Roberts, Mark Rohwell, Angus Ryall, Bill Scelding, Dick Stunger, Hannah Smith, Jeremy Spencer, Ben Stone, Paul Summer, Garth Sumpter, Matthew Uffindell, Massimo Valducci, Bym Welthy, David Western, Nik Wild; plus all the guwat Scan Studies, Neil Townley and everyone at Caclisle, and John and John and John Crotoise Shell.

And John Edwards, who got in all those adverts at the sourt that paid for it,



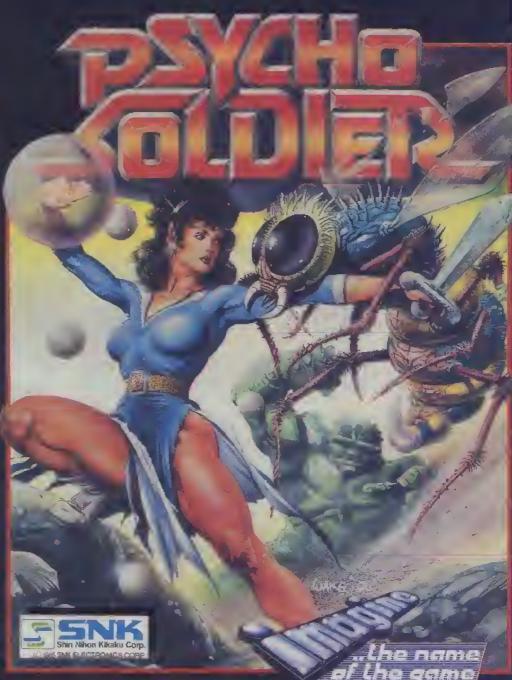
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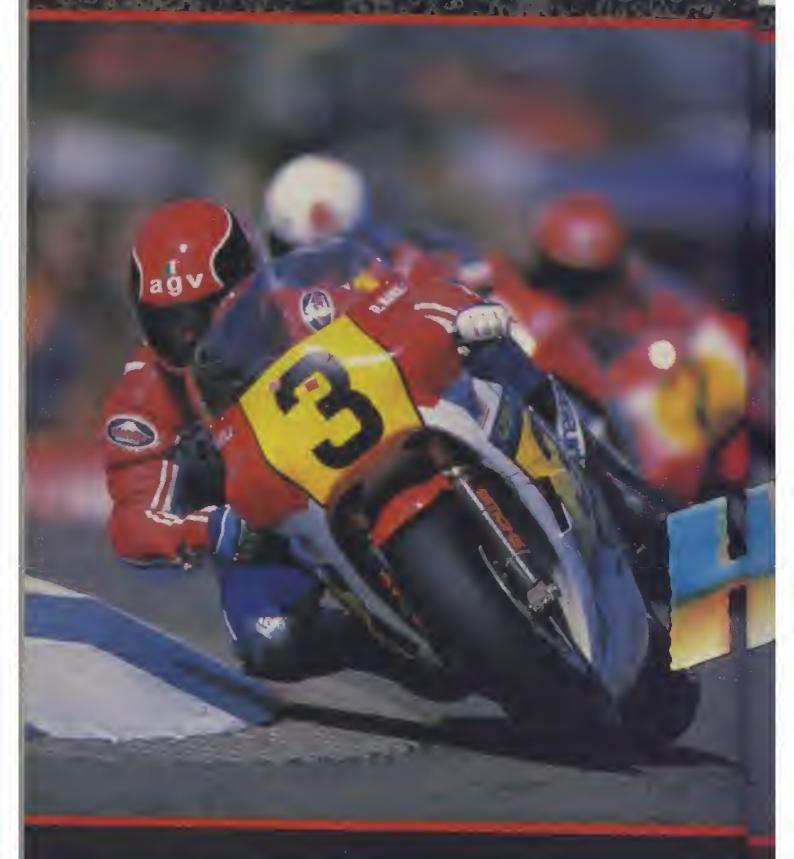


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ELECTRIC DREAMS



A NEWSFIELD PUBLICATION **AUGUST 1986** MORE MAPS THAN AN ATLAS!! PCW SHOW TICKETS FOR FREE!

August 1986 Issue No. 31

Released on July 31st

Hannah Smith's claim to unique girlie tipsterdom and the backlash from C&VG's Melassa Ravenflame' led directly to this cover - basically an advertising campaign for Hannah. The original brief - Hannah mud-unestling with Mehssa deemed too inflammatory, so Oliver substituted an alien for the Ravenflame. More in his element than for moral issue, Oliver stress in taken became the must quilar cover of the year, atmospheric, amusing and provocative by nans. CRASH alreays seems at its best with its back to the wall fighting for a belief . . .

Three new names appeared on this issue's masthead, Ian Craig was a well-known commercial illustrator, and some of his computer-related work had appeared the previous year in the Issue 21 On The Cover feature. The object was to have someone to help with the massive workload of illustrations, which up till then had all been on Oliver's shoulders. Tony Flanagan was a college lecturer from near Telford who wanted to move into journalism. He became the third Staff Writer for CRASH, but his time at the Towers turned out to be short. The third name had a familiar ring about it, especially to ZZAP! readers, for it was Julian's brother, Jonathan Rignall. The increasingly complex film-planning work we were undertaking in-house meant that Matthew Uffindell had less and less time to spare in the process camera room making halftone pictures. So Jonathan was brought into the department as a process-camera operator.

The month of July saw much activity on the new magazine, too - LM had become a reality, a launch date was set for a free copy with the Christmas Specials of the three computer titles, and Roger Kean was beginning interviews for the large new editorial team that would be required for this ambitious project. It was also clear that the King Street offices could no longer cope. Newsfield had been scarching for over a year for premises big enough for expansion, but there was nowhere available in Ludlow. So a large semidetached house similar in size to the King Street headquarters was purchased and converted to offices for administration and LM editorial. This was on Gravel Hill, Ludlow (once misspelled 'Grovel Hill', and it would soon be nicknamed 'The Grovelry' since it was where the pay cheques were issued . . .). But the move was still over a month away as the August issue started.

In the meantime, the tiny CRASH office was even more cramped, so Tony Flanagan was dispatched to Liverpool to interview Software Projects about their forthcoming conversion of Dragon's Lair. Interest ran high, partly because of Dragon's Lair arcade fame, partly because no-one could see how Coleco's complex, interactive game would come out on a home micro. It was hoped they would do better with it than US Gold did with the conversion of Kung Fu Master, a flaccid beat-'em-up which got 56% - the same as Subterranean Nightmare, but the latter was a £2.99 budget game under US Gold's new Americana label. Americana worked well enough for them on the Commodore 64, where golden oldies imported direct from the States offered good value for money, but of course in converting most lost their original qualities on the Spectrum and proved to be no more than low-value games like so many other budget products of the period.

Still, Firebird scored a budget Smash, Rebel Star, with Sean Masterson in Frontline, and a full-price one with Heartland. This areade adventure was programmed by Odin, who had ceased marketing their own product to become Telecomsoft developers . . . the absorption of independents by larger software houses continued. The Edge had a hit on their hands as the Marble Madness clone Bobby Bearing found CRASH favour; and so did Palace with the follow-up Cauldron II, successful because though it was a sequel in name, in gameplay it was entirely different from the first Cauldron, a very polished platform game. Hewson brought out Pyracurse, an isometrically 3-D scrolling adventure in the mould of Dragontore, but the peculiar problems it presented made it special.

Our peculiar problems were about to start - school holidays and nowhere to scat anyone . . .





September 1986 Issue No. 32

Released on August 28th Of all the covers in 1986, Oliver most booked forward to doing September's. He had been an avid Dan Davel Eagle fan as a boy, admired Frank Hampson (Dare's creator) and Frank Bellomy, who both had drown some of the original strips, and finally got to draw Dan Dare himself when Bagle was relaunched in the Eighties. But Oliver never rated the relaunched Eagle, so the notion of recreating an original Fifties-style Eagle front page for Virgin's acclaimed Dan Dare was close to his heart – as was having a comic as a CRASH cover.

The long-running Genesis – Birth Of A Game competition had reached midway point by September's issue. The judges, Domark and Design Design, had finally whittled the enormous amount of entries down to John Eggleton and Kat Trap. The rest of the series would now deal with the programming, packaging and marketing.

Programming, packaging and marketing was a problem Beyond were just about to walk headlong into as the company blithely announced to John Minson exciting plans for the official Star Trek game, little knowing that production of the game would take almost as long as a voyages of the starship Enterprise. Minson had another laugh up his sleeve: Gary Liddon and Andrew Wright had managed to crash their company car a week after getting it. The accident took place in a Manchester one-way street (they were going the wrong way, of course) and the car belonged to Thalamus. Yes, Newsfield had taken the plunge and created its own software house.

Thalamus really started at the July Commodore Show when a young man from Finland introduced himself in halting English as Stavros Fasoulas and showed Roger Kean a Commodore 64 game called Rainbow Warrior. Roger was so impressed with it that he persuaded the other directors to start a label and market the game. Stavros signed up, Gary Liddon was moved from Newsfield's magazines to look after programming technicalities, and Andrew Wright of Activision was appointed to head Thalamus (a name which he and Gary Liddon devised). Rainbow Warrior changed name to Sanxion and the rest, as they say, would be history – at least for the 64. Thalamus has yet to produce a Spectrum game.

Tie-in time looked pretty good for a change. Virgin's Dan Dare proved to be addictive, playable and quite original. It was also clever of them to make the game different on each of the main 8-bit machines, avoiding the inevitable, and often invidious, comparisons. Going from one Dan to another, Mirrorsoft repeated a success with Dynamite Dan II, improving elements of the original to make an entirely new game. Mikro-Gen just missed a Smash by a hair's breadth with Stainless Steel, a shoot-'em-up based loosely on Harry Harrison's Stainless Steel Rat character as re-envisaged by 2000AD, while CRL found themselves in Derek Brewster's good books with Fergus McNeill's lampoon The Boggit. Incidentally, The Hobbit was still at Number 7 in the CRASH Charts!

Another near-Smash was ACE, one of the best flight simulations on the Spectrum at the time, and it came from Cascade – one of the earliest Spectrum houses, but usually known for their classified ads for cheap compilations.

Upstairs was beginning to resemble the moment before the Great Flood, when the ark was incomplete and rain threatened. The administrative move to Gravel Hill was held up by decorating, but the new LM team was getting busy writing and designing a dummy of the magazine to be presented to potential advertisers at a launch party set for mid-September. To add to the problems, the art department needed more people to cope with a fourth magazine. The solution seemed to be to move Matthew Uffindeli and his huge light table down a floor, but only once the administrative people and LM had moved off to Gravel Hill. Somehow we packed the animals in two by two—and it rained chaos.



A NEWSFIELD PUBLICATION
No.33 October 1986
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October 1986 Issue No. 33

Released on September 25th October's cover marked a departure from the previous 32 covers; for the first time in the GRASH history it was painted by a hand other than Oliver Frey's, that of lan Craig. It was not designed with any particular game in mind, but did have a passing resemblance to (and was a visual pun on) Oliver's very first GRASH cover. For the savage face, Ian used a photograph of a friend, though the pointed ears and sharp fangs were invented. At Oliver does with many pictures, Ian used an airbrush and then overpainted with an ordinary brush.

Early in September most of the editorial and mail-order staff decamped to London's Olympia for the ninth *PCW* Show. It was the year of the infamous sticker campaign, when *C&VG* plastered the Newsfield stand with Melissa Ravenflame adhesive labels, and Newsfield realiated with some Hannah Smith stickers printed at the last moment. At one point, *Commodore User* editor Eugene Lacy returned to the EMAP stand's office and could no longer find the door—Mike Dunn and Ben Stone had hidden it under literally hundreds of stickers.

It was also the moment when Gargoyle Games underwent a metamorphosis and became Faster Than Light. Apart from the excitement of their own two games, Lightforce and Shockway Rider, they had a hit on their hands for Elite with the much-delayed Scooby Doo. Elite were riding high: after a disappointing Commodore 64 conversion of the coin-op Paper Boy, it only just missed a CRASH Smash on the Spectrum, though the Capcom conversion 1941 did far less well. Domark followed up the puzzles of Splitting Images with the official version of Trivial Pursuit. Despite the many trivia clones already out, the qualities of Domark's version shone out, and it too received a Smash. We also thought highly of Costa Panayi's Revolution, a 3-D puzzle-solving game which earned Vortex yet another in their long line of Smashes.

The biggest disappointment, though hardly a surprise, came with Ocean's ludicrously delayed *Knight Rider*. Rumours from within Ocean's offices had said it was a poor effort, and it was.

Internally there were some sweeping changes. The new offices opened, admin moved out, film planning moved down, LM moved across for two weeks from its small room into what had been advertising before finally departing to Gravel Hill, CRASH moved upstairs to where LM had been and Cameron Pound's photographic empire gained the room CRASH had just vacated. It was a bit like playing Splitting Images.

Graeme Kidd waved a goodbye of sorts. At the very end of August, shortly after CRASH's new Staff Writer Tony Flanagan had decided to leave, Graeme himself resigned over administrative problems. It was a difficult moment, with CRASH short-staffed and LM starting up, so Graeme was offered a new job as Publishing Executive in overall charge of the three computer magazines – which he accepted. However, he would remain titular editor of CRASH for a while yet. Meanwhile, Roger Kean had finally relinquished the editorship of ZZAPI to Gary Penn, and moved with the rest of LM to their new home in Gravel Hill. It was a busy month.

And on top of that came news from the Audit Bureau Of Circulations that CRASH was still the biggest-selling computer title in Britain, outstripping all others at over 100,000 copies a month. Roger Kean recalled a meeting in April 1984 with several top people from the old Imagine in Liverpool, when someone prophetically told him that CRASH was so different that it was bound to sell over 100,000 a month soon. He had been pleased, but seriously doubted CRASH would ever reach those sorts of figures. Doing better than 50,000 would have been a thrill for us in those early months.

At about the moment the October edition reached the printers, LM was officially launched at a big party in London, where the dummy was introduced to potential advertisers and Roger Kean made a speech he had rehearsed for days. I hate parties, I didn't go.



A NEWSFIELD PUBLICATION No.34 NOVEMBER 1986

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WHEN IT MOVES, WE PREVIEW IT

The Run Up to Christmas

November 1986 Issue No. 34

Released on October 23rd For me this is probably the least interesting CRASH cover, and certainly a disappointment from Ian Grang after the previous month's. The dynamics work well enough but the definition of both craft and explosion is poor; it is hard to see where you are or what is happening. The illustration, of course, relates to FTL's game Lightforce.

With the departure of Tony Flanagan there was another shuffle as Lee Paddon moved over from AMTIX! to CRASH. Lee had joined Newsfield some months earlier from the magazine Your Computer to act as the AMTIX! Software Editor — not that there was a lot of good software to be concerned about. We seemed to have moved into that strange post-PCW Show period when there ought to be lots of games released but software houses are still fighting to get their product completed.

Gargoyle Games's new FTL label kicked off well, however, with Lightforce, bemusing everyone with the fact that it was a hard and fast thouse the responsive in rather man a complex scrolling graphic adventure. 'A chance,' said the Smash review, for 'mainstream arcade entertainment,' unfortunately forgetting that that was exactly how Gargoyle Games had started out three years earlier, with the 3-D shoot-'em-up Ad Astra. And Lightforce's graphics strongly resembled Ad Astra.

Quicksilva's Glider Rider was an odd case; the 48K version of this 3-D forced-perspective road game got 80%, but the 128K version soared to 92%. The real difference seemed to be the sound. And sound was only one of the problems faced by Digital Integration's TT Racer. It least favour for being too much of a simulation and being too difficult to play.

But there were two more Smashes. Napoleon At War from CCS excited Sean Masterson, and the game with the silliest name ever – Fat Worm Blows A Sparky – earned Durell some extravagant praise for the 'stunbingly original' solid 3-D graphics and its wormy animation.

There were enough disappointments for several issues, mostly in the budget range, where there was hardly anything of quality (apart from a few games on Mastertronic's M.A.D. label). Following on from the previous month's release of Knight Rider came another Ocean game 18 months late – Street Hawk. Again the difficulties of developing the game shone through, though it did slightly better with 68%. Another tie-in proved a letdown: Asterix And The Magic Cauldron from Melbourne House. Heavily pushed as their big Christmas game, it was so bug-ridden that playability was irrelevant. The big arcade conversion was Dragon's Lair, but Software Projects's problem in reproducing anything of the original's video-disk graphics – largely regarded as the only really interesting element of the arcade machine – let it down dismally on the Spectrum.

Gremlin Graphics fared far better with their Spectrum version of the Commodore 64 hit Trailblazer and it was a creditable and addictive game which just missed being a Smash at 88%.

We featured an interview with programmer Don Priestley, a man with possibly the longest Spectrum track record; but from a historical point of view it was the interviewer rather than the interviewee who was noteworthy. Bill Scolding had been the editor of Sinclair User and taken that magazine from a strong position to the leading place till CRASH overtook its sales. Bill never seemed to have borne CRASH any hard feelings over the previous year's verbal war – so when he resigned from Sinclair User earlier in 1986 he had come to Ludlow to help out for a few weeks with editorial, leading to his ex-colleagues ringing him at home with a cheery 'Morning Judas'. Sticks and stones etc.





OF REVIEWS We look at a host of unfinished games

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December 1986 Issue No. 35

Released on November 20th After the leidown of the Lightforce cover illustration, Oliver Frey steamed back in with a large close-up monster picture. The excuse for st was Ocean's Cobra, and eather than slavishly devise some illustration based on the game Oliver chase to interpret the title literally. The serpent is very much in Frey/CRASH style: chromium-plated needle fangs, slavaring javos agape dripping tehat could be alien machine oil. Its impact is undeniable, and I think it was the strongest image of the year.

As if to make up for the November issue, December's provided seven Smashes. Demon Designs struck back after some indeterminate games with *The Great Escape* for Ocean, displaying yet another form of isometric perspective to describe the World War II POW castle from which the player hoped to escape. And Hewson must have been pleased; Steve Crow, with three previous Smashes for other software houses to his name, programmed his fourth for them. *Firelord* was a game of chivalry set to Steve's characteristically attractive graphics. Then there was the risky conversion of Andrew Braybrook's monster Commodore 64 hit *Uridium*. The risk paid off – much credit to Dominic Robinson, who recreated the original fast-scrolling bas-relief graphics very well.

Durell clocked up another Smash with their dragon story *Thanatos*, and Mosaic's adaptation of a Dick Francis novel gave Derek a pre-Christmas treat in the Adventure Trail. Ocean hit big film tie-in time when *Cobra* – cynically expected to be a terrible disaster – turned out to be a fast, addictive and playable winner.

One of the year's big coin-op successes had been Gauntlet, an obvious case for conversion. US Gold had the official rights, but clones were a-cloning and it was a close race between Firebird, who got a Smash for Druid, and Electric Dreams, who just didn't for Dandy. But what was interesting was Dandy's claim to originality, for the coin-op Gauntlet was a conversion of the original Atari game called Dandy written by student John Palevich!

There were some close misses, too; Palace's The Sacred Armour Of Antiriad, for example. But if Ocean's tie-in gamble with big Cobra had paid off, US Gold's big gamble with The Goonies did not - it was a dispiriting mishmash of a game.

December was also notable for the first time budget-game reviews were grouped together; this 'budget ghetto' had (and has since) often been considered for CRASH, but rarely repeated,

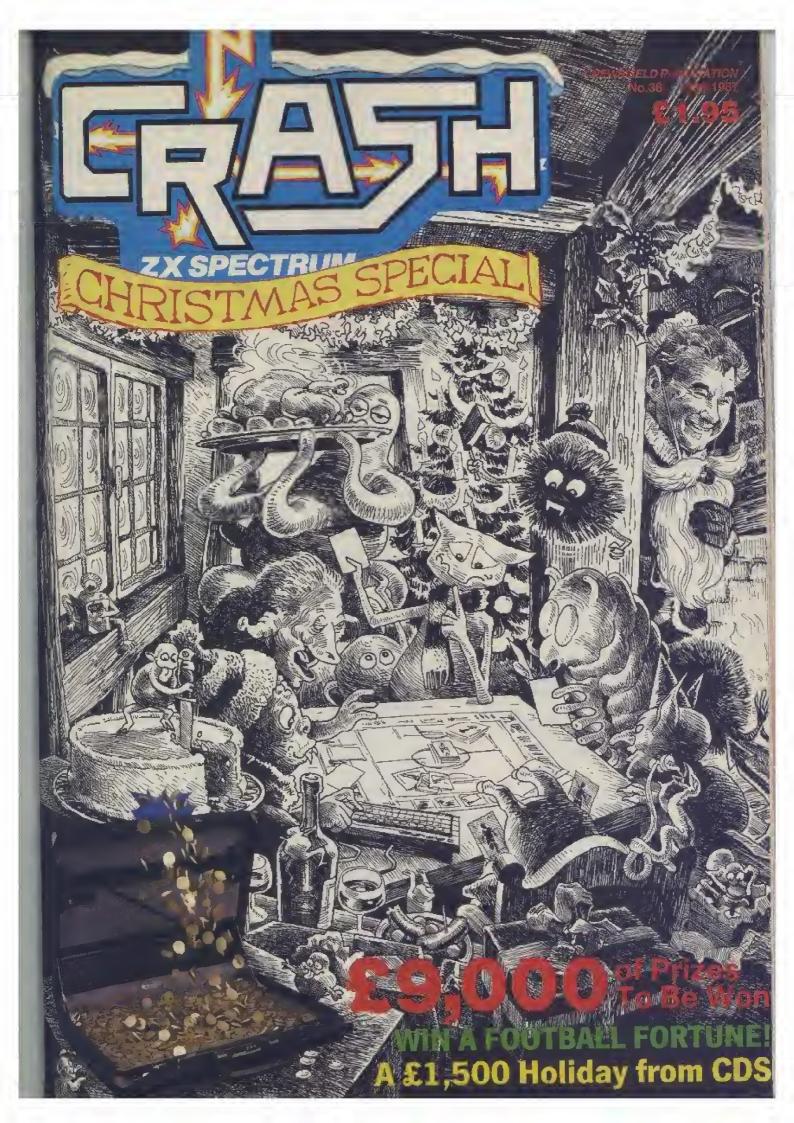
Kat Trap was coming along well, and after the previous month's preview December's issue included an article about how Oliver was painting the game's packaging—and the ad appeared too, though it wasn't included in Bill Scolding's wry look at software advertising, a funny article which reviewed some recent ads and rated them in traditional CRASH style.

The first issue (Issue Zero) of LM was almost ready for printing; to reach as many readers as possible, it was to be included free in the Christmas Specials of CRASH, ZZAP! and AMTIX! rather than go on the newsagents' shelves on its own. Up in the art department life was frenzied, as they would soon be working on four magazines simultaneously. Still, two new paste-up artists appeared to help out: Sebastian Clare and Tim Croton. Sebastian's father had once owned a company called Small School Software, whose premises had been the first floor of the King Street Offices before CRASH editorial moved down there late in 1984 circles within circles.

And there were two other new staff members; in film planning Newsfield took on Nick Orchard, a school-leaver, for Matthew Uffindell to train as a colour film planner (he was bearing in mind the extra work involved on the all-colour LM). And downstairs in the photographic department, Cameron Pound received some help from Michael Parkinson, a YTS trainee from nearby Tenbury Wells.

Newsfield's first office Christmas do, held at a restaurant outside Ludlow, had been for ten people. The second had been for 40 (staff and family) and was held at the Bull Inn (home of the fictinious Old Flarulence Bitter). This year's was to be for some 64 staff and many invitees – we were getting bigger . . .





Christmas Special 1986/1987 Issue No. 36 Released on December 10th

The nature of CRASH Christmas issue covers was established, but this year Oliver had a problem; CDS had been promised a cover based around their Brian Clough's Football Fortunes. He resolved it by setting loads of Olibugs round a table playing the handleomputer game, while Clough, dressed as Santa Claus, peered on. It was unusual because it was entirely manachrome — but this suited Oliver, who had three other covers to do at the same time. Yet the vigorous line drawing makes its run impact, and it remains one of the best-taken risks in his CRASH career.

CRASH readers got their first chance to see Newsfield's biggest gamble to date with a free 80-page issue of LM. There was also an article inside CRASH showing a picture of the LM editorial team taken at the London office (LM had two offices!). I wasn't present, which was just as well, because the picture was very dark. A staggering 296,000 copies of LM Issue Zero were printed, and the investment then, and in later months, would very nearly cripple the company.

Where to hold the Christmas 'do' was settled by booking Ludlow's biggest disco (out of two), the Starline Club. In the event, some 150 people turned up, some software houses travelling right across the country to be there. It pleased us a lot that they made the effort.

Yet another new face turned up in the art department, that of Markie Kendrick, who applied for the job because he knew the magazines and had once even drawn a Sabreman cartoon strip. Markie was a good find, quick at layout and fast on the draw – it was his comic inventiveness that led to King Grub in LM (and later in CRASH).

The games were less exciting, though Realtime gave us their very best Smash yet in Starglider – good on the 48K version, extraordinary on the 128K – for Rainbird, and Rainbird also received Derek's accolade for their Jewels Of Darkness compilation of Level 9's older adventures. But Derek was less than pleased with the 'Class Of '86' overall, thinking it a generally lacklustre year for adventures games.

Design Design had been busy; two for Piranha included the Smashed 3-D Draeula story Nosferatu and the less than Smashed 2000AD licence Rogue Trooper; and then there was Domark's Kat Trap. At last the Genesis comp had given birth. It was a bit hard for the CRASH reviewers because they were all aware of the danger of bias, or at least being accused of it, so extra care was taken: however, Kat Trap still did well at 84%.

The remaining Smashes went to CRL for Pete Cooke's stunning follow-up to Tan Ceri, Academy, and to veterans Microsphere for their brilliant detective areade adventure Contact Sam Cruise.

The big fun event for all the magazines was the Reviewers' Challenge, which starred Gary Penn and Julian Rignall representing ZZAP!, Richard Eddy and Massimo Valducci representing AMTIX! and Ben Stone and Mike 'Skippy' Dunn representing CRASH. Massimo was a young man from Shrewsbury who had been given a job earlier as a trainee subeditor, but had drifted into the role of AMTIX! reviewer. His Italian good looks made him popular with the female members of Newsfield staff, and their bets were on him to win. Everyone else's were on Julian Rignall as supposedly the company's ace arcadester, but in the event it was Ben Stone who won for CRASH . . . much to his surprise.

Just before the Christmas rush really began, the magazines got themselves a real live subeditor in mad Irishman Ciarán Brennan (a sub's job is to go through articles checking the spelling, grammar and sense of the piece, rewriting if necessary). During the early days much fun was made of typographical errors in CRASH (though they were as apparent in other magazines). Now there was no excuse.





ROBIN CANDY'S SCORES

IT'S finally arrived. The health inspectors have finally closed down Lloyd Mangram's notorious intl of olime, and here's ROBIN CANDY with SCORES — a monthly game-by-game list showing the whole range of scores on the very latest games (so Jet Set Willy record-breakers are out from the whole and

the word gol).

Each month there'll be the top score so far received for each game – first under the game heading – and then a couple of others so you can measure yourself against not only interface-burners but ordinary mortals too. And each month there'll be five winners picked at random (insofar as anything in the universe is truly 'random' – our every action affects the 'structure' of 'being' with a concatenation of 'cause', 'effect', 'cause', 'effect' which some are pleased to call 'coincidence') from all the entiries received, regardless of whether they're printed or not. The first entry drawn each month will win £40 of software of the winner's choice plus a CRASH cap and T-shirt, and four runners-up will receive CRASH caps and T-shirt soo! so don't forget to tell us on the form what software and T-shirt you'd like if you do win. Finally, the management apologise for the extremely confusing **SCORES** entry form in Issue 46, which was the result of that endless cosmic concatenation of 'cause', 'effect', 'cause', 'effect' we call 'technical reasons'.

Now read on ...

BATTY Simon Auger, Canvey Island, Essex Tommy Green, Mitcham Andrew Mcmurdo, Ashington, Noithumberland	Elite 1654075 51180 117350	
BOMBJACK	Elite	
Jonathan Ridehalgh, Markfield	625950	
Paul Morris, Southport	203790	
Jason Guest, Dudley	500290	

BORRIE ROBBLE
Jake Flewin, London NW
Paul Recves, Bournemouth
Daniel Goulden, Reading

DEATH WISH 3 Tommy Green, Mitcham Dawn Mells, Sidcup S D King, Wincanton Paul Morris, Southport

ENDURO RACER Philip Rees, Chipping Norton

Stuart Whapples, Harrogate Sam Spundlow, Worksop

Gremlin Graphics

187000 99730 48905 117300

Firebird

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Activision 2224458 1795068

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EXOLON

Paul Tinsley, Pill lan Reld, Reigate Michael Turner, Stoke Gabriel, Devon

FREDDY HARDEST

Derek Honny, Fife Paul Calvert, Peterlee, Durham

GAUNTLET

Miguel Nunes, Torquay Paul Morris, Southport David Port, Liversedge, West Yorkshire Hewson

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RENEGADE

Miail Lecoustre, Preston Daniel Mattsson, Bornholm, Denmark lain Rigby, Blackburn

WIZBALL

Paul Rooks, Washington Alan Mcgroajy, Doune, Perthshire Nicholas Fellis, Harrow

ZYNAPS

David Fort, Liversedge Dave Mortimer, Bristol Michael Wright, Walsall

WINNERS

Michael Wright of Walsall was first out of the boastful horse's mouth this month — he wins £40 worth of software (including Mercenary, Elite and, as a break from all those high-score challenges, Rainbird's Advanced OCP Art Studio) plus, of course, a CRASH cap and T-shirt. We're looking forward to be On The Secret posters. his On The Screen entries.

Runners-up, each getting a CRASH cap and T-shirt, are Wayne Binnle Coventry, Chris Jenkins of Glasgow, Stuart Whapples of Harrogate of Coventry, Chris Jenkins of Glasgow, Stuart Whappies of H and Miguel Nunes of Torquay. Remember – any score sent in to SCORES can win your a prize.

SEND ME YOUR SCORES

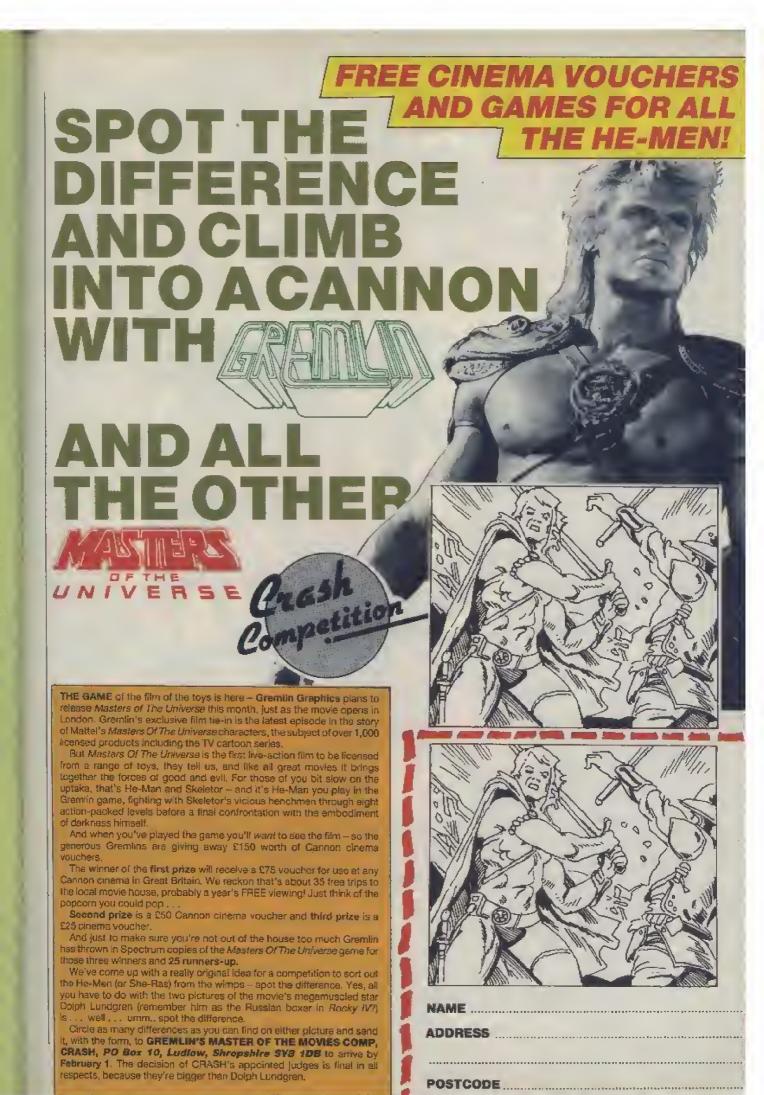
Send this form for a copy) with your scores for up to three games to ROBIN CANDY'S SCORES, CRASH, PO Box 10, Ludiow, Shropshire SY8 1DB. Only genuine scores will be accepted; any improbably huge scores forced to listen to The Art Of Noise – a fate worse than sharing a desk with light Mangram. Hoyd Mangram.

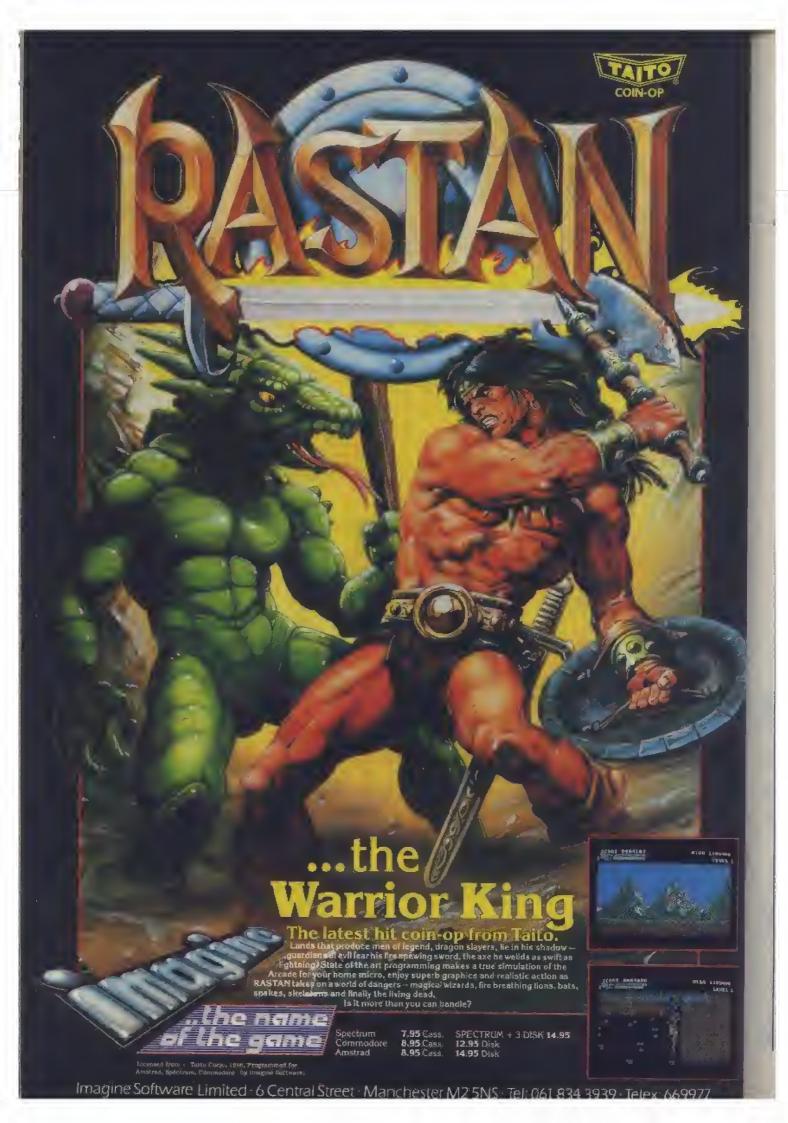
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IF A WIN TOP PRIZE I WOULD LIKE THIS \$40 WORTH OF SOFTWARE:

AND IF I WIN ANY PRIZE I WOULD LIKE THIS CRASH T-SHIRT, CHOSEN FROM ADVERTISED ON PAGES 166-167:

The decision of CRASH's appointed judges is absolutely final in all respects, insofar as anything in an expanding universe can be 'final'







with Philippa Irving



ARGAN

TO MY GREAT RELIEF things have picked up again this month; which is just as well, for I was beginning to fear for the future of wargaming on the Spectrum. And for my job! The wargame world concentrates heavily on World War II scenarios. I

don't have statistics to hand, but it seems that in the last year most of the games which have relied on traditional troop-moving have concerned the years 1939-1945. Many of the public prefer games based on familiar the years 1939-1945. Many of the public prefer games based of raffiliar battles (especially those in the last war) because they are still very recent history, film critic Barry Norman has commented that Nazis make perfect cinematic villains. The imagination is excited by the kind of baddle whose image is still part of everyday life, but who is no longer a threat. Practical considerations are also an important factor: designers can lake advantage of the many diaries and memoirs of the last war which have been published, and photographs are abundant.

However, there many people, myself included, who would like to see wars from the much more distant past, and imaginary wars, treated in the same way. If reliable historical information is lacking, then surely a resourceful designer could make it up. Games based on events many centuries ago could be just as realistic as those of World War II.

What about a game, with a series of scenarios and a campaign, about some of the wars tought by the Israelites in the Old Testament? Or Hannibal's Invasion of Raly? Another possibility is Boadicea's uprising. I'm not a programmer and I'm not a military historian, but I can think of half a dozen ideas off the top of my head.

The Spectrum's memory does have limitations, which do affect the way strategies are devised. However, a bit of imagination and innovation would revitalise things.

HIGH FRONTIER

PRODUCER: Activision **AUTHOR: Alan Steel** PRICE: £9.99

High Frontier is most unusual; it's not entirely hypothetical, as the Americans' Strategic Defence Initiative (the so-called Star Wars system, with space-based laser weapons set up to destroy nuclear missiles which attack the States) is going to become a reality. Nearly all wargames are either based on the past or are purely hypothetical; this one is on the frontier of the present and the future.

Another unusual aspect is that you are not only defending a superpower—you're conducting a major research project at the same time. The objective is to construct one or more satellite systems and get ther Russian them into orbit before a bombardment takes place: success is measured by how few missiles get through to American soil. So even if your teachers couldn't see you teachers couldn't see you becoming an aerospace engineer, you now have the chance to prove

them wrong.

High Frontier is presented in a series of highly symbolic icon-driven screens, and it is essential to use the 26-page manual to

interpret the screens. The first interpret the screens. The trist stage in playing the game is to decide how many missiles the USSR starts off with, and whether the presidents of the USA and the USSR are warlike hawks, peacemongering 'doves'

middle-of-the-road realists. Having made your choices, you have to develop and assemble have to develop and assemble your defence systems, keeping a watchful eye on the clock (because an attack is coming) and on expenditure (because the money for the project has to come from somewhere). There are six defence systems available, the web the soft the refixed world have the detence systems available, though it's unlikely you'll have the time or funds to get all six operational before being attacked. So the player must allocate funds and manpower to the projects of his choice, and each stage of each project requires a particular level of funding and manning.

Your requirements vary from stage to stage, and are never predictable, which adds to the strange addictiveness. Some of research turns out to be fruitless, but once you manage to produce satellites, you can launch

True to life, some of the launches are flops. And even when

the satellites are in space, they can be a millstone round your neck, as payments must be kept up. Faiture to pay off all the development costs will result in bits falling off them.

The author has made sure that Presidential telephone icon cannot be ignored. Throughout the game, the President contacts player, usually to ask for gress reports. Since the the progress reports. Since the President controls the purse strings, anything you tell him should be calculated to get him to release more money for research. this section becomes a

cynical exercise in telling him only what he ought to be told!

Sooner or later, the real excitement begins, it's all over very quickly, and the program will assess the performance of each defence system. It may be a

postmortem.

High Frontier is beautifully produced to what might be called arcade standards, and makes a

Activision's High Frontier: developing space-age defence for an inevitable war



neat and self-contained game with a fairly short time limit, My only complaint is that there's little to it, though it's enjoyable to play while it lasts. But it's certainly well put together, and the manual is interesting in itself.

Presentation 90% Extremely polished; and it's easy to control despite the apparent complexity of the icon system

Graphics 87% Both attractive and functional

79% Substantial, though it's difficult to find things

Authenticity 75% It's difficult to judge the authenticity of a simulation of something which doesn't exist – but the final stage generates etmosphere

Playability Funding and manning scientific research has never been more fun!

OVERALL 71% High Frontier offers enjoyment, but not lasting interest



Legions Of Death

There aren't many tips for Lothlorien's Punic Wars naval simulation (64% Overall in Issue 37) - because it's 'so excruciatingly easy', says Ed Sykes of Winchester, who sent

these in . . .

- 1 Put victory conditions to maximum
- Build ten quinqueremes as well-equipped as possible (ie marines, archers, corrus). Don't buy sails or a tower.
- 3 Place four in Carthage, the other

six around Sicily

Collect gold and deposit it in Carthage, attacking any Roman ships that get in the way (always have at least two ships together. or they'll be picked off by the Romans)

Carry on till a) the Roman fleet destroys itself by continually attacking you, or b) you have enough gold to buy ships in order to finish them off

The map
All the map features have their own code between 0 and 255. The map itself is from 1990 in \$100.00 to 50000 to 54000. Code 0 represents nothing on the map so the airlock doors etc can be removed by POKEing the

location of the feature with 0. The memory area 54001 to about 60000 contains the graphics for the features, men and droids. By experimenting

you can change the graphics.
The graphic characters are all 32 bytes long and are stored as data in 4 blocks of 8 bytes each. The characters are like four user-definable characters together, stored like so:

PEGASUS BRIDG

Producer: PSS Price:£12.95

June 5 1944 was the night of action: after a year of secret plan-ning, the British Sixth Airborne Division landed in Nazi-occupied

Normandy. What makes a game based on this operation interesting is that the objectives of capturing and bombing bridges - or defending them - are more important than killing large numbers of enemies. and so the gameplay feels more realistic than usual.

The player is given a choice of sides to play against the com-puter, which always makes a game more satisfying, and there is a two-player option.

At the beginning of Pegasus Bridge, the British have not yet made their parachute drops and so there are no British units on the map. The German forces are distri-buted around various rather remote comers, with only a handful of men already positioned near the all-important bridges.

Maps and other information are provided in the booklet and on the screen. The booklet assumes you have a detailed geographical knowledge of the area, which makes things frustrating; as with most computer-wargame maps, what appears on the screen is barely recognisable as landscape.

There are ten different types of terrain, which affect the movement of the troops and the defensibility of particular areas. The Sixth Airbome Division and German torces are both divided into many battal-ions, with the characteristics of each listed in the booklet.

If you take the German side, your objective is to keep as many key positions as possible till the end of the 36-turn game. But I took the British side, and will describe Pegasus Bridge from that perspective.

The game begins when you give the Sixth Airborne Division clear-ance to start out for Normandy, though the number of aircraft is not enough for a rapid invasion. The Germans are alerted and hurry to defend the territory they occupied

four years earlier.

When controlling the British side, the first thing the player has to do is decide where each unit is going to parachute (later some ground units arrive at positions preset by the program). Landing on open ground is recommended, since landing in towns or woods will divide the unit and make it less effective. But the wind makes things difficult,

Having set enough troops on French soil, the British player's task is to capture and hold the river and canal bridges in Caen, to destroy or occupy the five crossings of the river Dives, and to occupy the Merville Battery area.

Movement follows in a straightforward fashion: units, each represented on the screen by very small squares like minute postage stamps, can be stacked and moved together at the speed of the slowest unit in the stack,

Yet it's annoyingly difficult to control the cursor using the using the keyboard, and great care has to be taken in selecting units and then trying not to overshoot their destination.

Combat operates on similar principles, with strength

principles, with strength and weaponry affecting the outcome. After engaging in combat and capturing a bridge, a British unit can, if it has the means, blow it up, (it's stating the obvious to say that the unit must be removed from the bridge facts). bridge first!) The bridges over the Caen canal and Orne river should be preserved to meet the victory conditions, though,

The booklet is well-written and full of detail, including a descrip-tion of the course of the actual battle and that useful section called 'author's notes' in which the game's designer defends its idiosyncrasies and points out its more obscure merits.

With matter-of-fact modesty the author comments that the computer opponent is 'neither particularly clever, nor particularly stupid', and points out the precanousness and daring uncertainty of

the original operation.

And Pegasus Bridge reflects that rather well. This is a solidlydesigned game with an interesting scenario closely based on history and plenty of play in it.

Presentation

70% Annoying key action comes close to ruining the playability

Graphics 81% Attractive, though the unit counters are too small

Rules 89% Excellent - a thorough description of play and the historical background

Authenticity 80% Clearly based closely on the historical situation, but unatmospheric

Playability 70% Limited by the difficulties of cur-sor-control





UDG 1 UDG 2 UDG 2 UDG 3

The names for the map features and men are stored at about 38000 as phrases of single

So it's not too difficult to change the map, object, graphics and names.

But moving the computer and defence lasers is more difficult as the new coordinates must be entered elsewhere in the

Rebelstar Raiders

All these POKEs for Firebird's classic Rebelstar Raiders (from Chris Davis of Ludlow!) except the last can be used in both one-player and two-player versions. The first set removes all the sliding

50375.0	50391.0	50616,0
50701.0	50758,0	50776,0
51015.0	51031.0	51074.0
51082,0	51167,0	51176,0
51186.0	51273,0	51323,0
51331.0	51470,0	51489,0
51494,0	51512,0	51629,0
51647.0	51656,0	51715,0
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51992.0	52233,0	52306,0
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These POKEs destroy all the airlock doors:

50565.0	50569.0
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700-40-0	20042,0
50725.0	50729.0
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E9945 0	EGOCO A
52243.0	52250.0

52323,0 52330,0 52403.0 52483.0 52563.0 52410,0 52490,0 52570,0 52856.0 53016.0

And these POKEs destroy all the security doors:

50603,0 50764,0 51560,0 52681,0	50608,0 51008,0 51721,0
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Now you should have no trouble gettling into the place, at least. To enter the following POKEs, which are helpful for combat:

merge the header program type 'STOP:' before the first RANDOMIZE USR statement type 'RUN load the game as normal enter the POKEs type 'CONTINUE'

To make the combat droids Indestructible:

> FOR I=61263 TO 61294: PÓKE I.O: NEXT I

To make the men indestructible (and the androids indestructible when in fire mode):

OR (=60846 TO 60878: POKE I.O: NEXT I

To destroy the three defence

POKE 53627.0 POKE 53661.0

The next POKE only works on the

two-player version of Rebelstar Raiders. It changes the action. points needed to fire to zero for the rebels and the operatives.

POKE 26705,120

VULCAN

Colin Pratt of Weybridge has sent a victory-by-numbers formula for winning CCS's excellent Vulcan by November 20 as the Allies,

November 12: Travel Sixth Commando battalion and the Hart Force to Bizerta 14: Travel 78th Infantry division to just before the junction south of Bizerta 15: Travel First Parachute battalion to Tarberra 16: Travel First Parachute battalion and Blade Force to just before the junction south of Bizerta. Make suicide attack with Hart Force a few miles south. Fortify Sixth Commando battalion. 17: Move 78th Infantry division to Bizerta, avoiding the enemy units. Travel reinforcements for 78th Infantry to just before the junction south of Bizerta. 19: Travel 78th Infantry division to just north of Tunis

19: If the 78th has reached its destination, attack Tunis

20: Keep attacking Tunis with the 78th. Travel First US Armoured division to just before the junction south of

This should be enough to take Tunis and win the war, If it isn't congregate the French and British armour and American infantry

west of Tunis and the British infantry and American amour to the north. Cut off Tunis with the American infantry and attack with the northern forces.

ANNALS OF ROME (STAY POPULAR!)

PSS's Annals Of Rome is more of collection of bugs than a game, as W Errington of Sheffield testifies, but it's curiously absorbing all the same. He advocates building up an empire gradually, when you've captured one province, wait till the revolts die down before going on to the next. Once the empire has been established, civil war becomes the major threat. No matter how high a governor's loyalty, if you put him in charge of

alarge force before long it's a case of 'treachery in Aegyptus'.

A good way to improve low loyalty is to make your most aged. incompetent and disloyal senator the commander of the Roman garrison. Almost inevitably he will rebel and make himself dictator, and your popularity rating will be readjusted – with any luck, upward. If not, you can always repeat the operation! Finances are unimportant - only popularity

NVISX II NVOENTIS

In Issue 49 Frontline: the debate on strategy morality continues, alongside reviews and a long Briefing. Send your letters and tips to: PHILIPPA IRVING. FRONTLINE, CRASH, PO Box 10, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 108.

BLITZKRIEG

BY KEN WRIGHT

Blitzknieg simulates the German attack in May 1940 when the Low Countries and France were overrun. The French Maginot Line was by-passed by the mighty German army spearheaded by Kleist's crack Panzergruppe.

GAME FEATURES: You command 5 German armies by a unique system of 3 cursors which enable you to set up a line of advance. The Allies defence is master-minded by the computer. Large scrolling map on varied terrain, hidden movement and 3 levels of difficulty, For 1 player,



SPECTRUM 48K & 128K - £9.95 Available Mail Order by return from Cases Computer Simulations Ltd., 14 Langton Way, London SE3 7TL. Tel: 01-858 0763,





The three charts compiled from the votes of CRASH readers is the most realistic chart for gauging the popularity of Spectrum games -it is the games that are being played that get the votes, not the games that are in the shops this week or month.

And the votes are important, it's up to you to let us know what you feel, so fill in the voting forms which live on the results pages and

in FRONTLINE to make your voice heard.
If you don't want to carve up your issue of CRASH, we understand, Use a photocopy if you like, or copy the details from the voting forms onto a postcard, or the back of a sealed envelope, and send that to us instead.

Apart from the satisfaction of registering your vote, there's always the chance of winning a prize. Each month we draw 15 winners from

the chance of winning a prize. Each month we draw 15 winners from all the voting forms received – five for the HOTLINE, five for the ADVENTURE and five for the STRATEGY chart.

A top prize of £40 worth of software (your choice, not ours) and a CRASH T-shirt is awarded to the first slip drawn from the HOTLINE votes, and another £40 of goodies and a shirt goes to the ADVENTURE and £20 of goodies and a shirt goes to the STRATEGY Four runners up from each ballot box collect a CRASH T-shirt and a CRASH Hat Soget these votes in talks CRASH NOTE INE CHART.

a CRASH Hat. Soget those votes in to the CRASH HOTLINE CHART.
CRASH ADVENTURE CHART and CRASH STRATEGY CHART: PO Box 10, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1DB.

Not much has changed in the Strategy Top Ten – the voters are fighting a war of attrition, CCS's Vulcan STILL holds the Number One spot, and it's just three re-entries at the bottom of the chart - nothing new. Rumour has it that there are a few new strategy games out soon (indeed, Frontline reviews two this issue . . . page 135 . . .), so let's see them here!

Mathew Payne, who strategically sent us a lovely James Dean postcard, gets £40 worth of software and a T-shirt via the quickest tank going in the direction of Gloucester. Caps and T-shirts will also be dispatched in a convoy of jeeps to Robert Parker of Mamble in Worcestershire (just up the road), Peter normal down in Margale, Mark Davies on the Trent in Stoke and, weather permitting, Michael Pini in Basildon, Essex.

A Top 30 with a difference – Stephen Jaggard of Newmarket sent in this list of the alt-time Top 30, based on every Hotline Chart in CRASH Issues 4-46 inclusive.

20

23 24

25

26

27

29

30

After the title and software house, it gives this information:

• the number of times the game's been in the chart

• the number of times it's been Number One (in brackets)

• the number of points it's earned on Stephen's system (30 for each time in first place, 29 for each time in second, etc).

[Stephen in the mounts of the interpretation of the points of the interpretation of the interpreta

We'll fet you draw your own conclusions from the mountain of statistics – but it's ironic to see Jon Ritman's Matchday, the one we never Smashed and you never put at Number One, at the topl (its sequel's Smashed this issue.)

Normal Hotline voting resumes now . . .

Strategy Top Ten

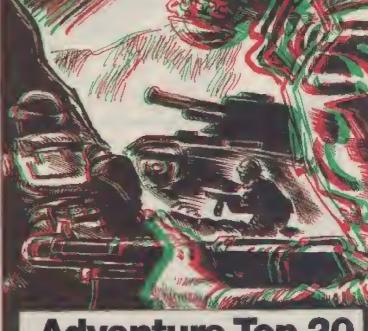
1 (1)	VULCAN	CCS
2 (3)	DESERT RATS	CCS
3 (2)	ARNHEM	CCS
4 (7)	LORDS OF MIDNIGHT	BEYOND
5 (5)	REBELSTAR RAIDERS	FIREBIRD
6 (4)	THEATRE EUROPE	PSS
7 (6)	DOOMDARK'S REVENGE	BEYOND
8 (-)	BISMARCK	PSS
9 (-)	BATTLE OF BRITAIN	PSS
10 (-)	YANKEE	CCS



MATCHDAY	OCEAN 33 (0) 746
ELITE	FIREBIRD 22 (2) 567
COMMANDO	ELITE 20 (5) 468
LORDS OF MIDNIGHT	BEYOND 29 (0) 454
BOMBJACK	ELITE 16 (0) 381
PAPERBOY	ELITE 12 (2) 330
SABRE WULF	ULTIMATE 16 (6) 313
	ST MELBOURNE HSE 17 (3) 311
KNIGHTLORE	ULTIMATE 14 (3) 304
ATIC ATAC	ULTIMATE 13 (0) 294
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UL THE STATE OF TH	FTWARE PROJECTS 12 (3) 279
QUAZATRON	HEWSON 14 (1) 277
BATMAN	OCEAN 16 (0) 271
	US GOLD 9 (8) 267
	HEWSON 11 (0) 260
	BUG BYTE 13 (1) 258
	OCEAN 10 (0) 257
	ULTIMATE 12 (1) 249
	BUBBLE BUS 13 (0) 244
	ULTIMATE 10 (0) 232
**************************************	ULTIMATE 11 (0) 221
	BEYOND 13 (0) 212
	US GOLD 10 (1) 209
	MASTERTRONIC 14 (0) 200
GREEN BERET	IMAGINE 10 (0) 198
	COMMANDO LORDS OF MIDNIGHT BOMBJACK PAPERBOY SABRE WULF WAY OF THE EXPLODING FE KNIGHTLORE ATIC ATAC HYPERSPORTS MATCH POINT GHOSTS N GOBLINS JET SET WILLY QUAZATRON BATMAN DALEY THOMPSONS DECA GAUNTLET

Shock! Horrori *The Hobbit* gets knocked off the top position (must be the slippery weather conditions in Middle Earth). And the Christmas Number One is *Stormbringer*, the window-driven arcade adventure from ace programmer David Jones. He also holds the Number Two and Seven spots with more M.A.D. games – *Spellbound* and *Knight Tyme*. After hovering at the bottom of the chart in Issue 46 *Killed Until Dead* shoots in at Number Eight. Further down, *The Pawn* re-enters with CRL's *Dracula* and *Very Big Cave Adventure*.

Lucky old Philip King from Clee Hill in Shropshire (which just happens to be just down the road... who picks the winners of these charts?) will get a nice present this Christmas – but besides that CRASH T-shirt he'll also get £40 worth of software, I'm assured. Games such as Vulcan, Stifflip & Co. and The Sentinel will be on their way via the next available local sheep. Cap-and-T-shirt-winning runners-up come from far places such as Sweden (like Anders Dunkler), Lichfield (like J Mortlock) Harrow (like Nicholas Tellis) and Lancashire (like J Counsell).



Adventure Top 20

	i
1 (9) STORMBRINGER	M.A.D.
2 (4) SPELLBOUND	M.A.D.
3 (1) THE HOBBIT	MELBOURNE HOUSE
4 (6) DOOMDARK'S REVENGE	BEYOND
5 (2) LORDS OF MIDNIGHT	8EYOND
6 (5) HEAVY ON THE MAGICK	GARGOYLE GAMES
7 (7) KNIGHT TYME	M.A.D.
8 (-) KILLED UNTIL DEAD	US GOLD
9 (10) LORD OF THE RINGS	MELBOURNE HOUSE
10 (3) THE BOGGIT	CRL
11 (14) RED MOON	LEVEL 9
12 (13) THE BIG SLEAZE	PIRANHA
13 (-) DRACULA	CRL
14 (11) GREMLINS ADVENT	URE INTERNATIONAL
15 (18) SHADOWS OF MORDOR	MELBOURNE HSE
16 (-) THE PAWN	RAINBIRD
17 (8) BORED OF THE RINGS	· CRL
18 (12) PRICE OF MAGIK	LEVEL 9
19 (-) VERY BIG CAVE ADVENT	TURE CRL
20 (20) FAIRLIGHT 2	THE EDGE



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▶ REDIY3-D: two issues ago we tried to show you how to use the CRASH 3-D glasses supplied with Issue 46 for your own 3-D artwork, using this King Grub drawing as an example. Stupidly we missed out the two crosses on each picture which are essential to the operation, so all you got was King Grub embarrassed and King Grub seasick.

Here the michaes are poster complete with process and herete what we

Here the pictures are again, complete with crosses, and here's what we said two months ago:

Place your paper ever the RED drawing, but before tracing the image with your red crayon trace the two little crosses carefully. After completing the



red drawing, move the paper over to exactly centre your two red crosses over the ones provided above and below the GREEN drawing. Now trace the green drawing, and then check the result through your CRASH spectacles.

(PS Remember you'ld need crayons as close to the colours of the 3-D glasses; two lenses as possible. Test this by scribbling with a red crayon and looking at the scribble through the red lens – If you can hardly see it, you're getting close! The same principle applies to the green tens, of course. For more details on 3-D, the universe and everything, refer to Issue 46.)

BREAK IN OUNCING L FRO



DDRESS

POSTCODE

CRL's got balls -- but they're going to be minus one when you've finished with them, because a real live leather Tango Mundial football (as used in cup matches) plus 20 copies of CRL's Bailbreaker are up to bat in this word-square comp.

Ballbreaker's the imaginative 3-D extension of the Breakout genre which we reviewed a couple of issues back. It's one of the latest in CHL's varied range - this month they go to the opposite end of the market with Jack The Rippert - and to shamelessly hype some of those past CRL successes we've devised a word square.

All you have to do to win the leather football and a copy of the game as **first prize** (or a copy of the game if you're one of **20 runners-up**) is find the titles of ten CRL games in the word square. To make it that little bit trickier, we've split up the two-word titles and one word has changed direction in the middle!

By the way, we didn't mean to have BUG, BUJJET and GAAC in the square – so no prizes for finding those computerish words. (If you did find 'em it would mean you couldn't spell, anyway.)

Put a line through each hidden word when you've found it, fill in the form and rush it all to LET'S PLAY BALL WITH CRL COMP, CRASH, PO Box 10, Ludiow, Shropshire SYS 1DB to arrive by February 1. The decision of CRASH's judges is final in all respects - and who needs say more than that, really?

R T H D KB 0 ETPSJ XCFYD G Ú JCU EAGG Z G AS C E A G U X G







SIMON N GOODWIN brings exclusive news of a Spectrum supercione set to rival Amstrad's range - plus tips on 128 noise.

incomparation de la comparation de la comparatio F 1 - 0 - 10 7

IR CLIVE STRICLAIR'S Spectrum is now more than five years plot it is Britain's most successful computer design, and reputedly more than four million have been sold. The Spectrum has survived seven major design revisions and a change of ownership — Sinclair sold Amstrad altrights to the machine in April 1986 — but seles are falling and prices are not us compatitive as they used to be,

Against this beckground it's certainty good news to hear of a SoperSoccraim from a new manafacturer. But will Amstrad put us a light? The consumer-electronics giant has already thed to kill Sinclai QL clones take the Sandy flutura from defunct, and the CST Thor (still in production). Amstrad has made money cloning 8BM porsputers, but is unlikely to take the view that imitation is the sincerest form of flattery of the market it's sewn up so coally is traded by a superior product. This seems like a good time to coasider the future of the Spectrum. Is Amstrad bass alan Sugai Sogerega dead florse? Is amone buying 87 Will the Spectrum be here at two years, or inten? Will these

still be new software for 8-bit machines such as the Spectrum?

AMSTRAD'S ACTIVITY

Alan Sugar says he wijends to selt half a million Spectrum + 3s. He has funted that the +3 will not be the last Spectrum model, and it's dasy to find endence to back this up. The +3 esthe first real Amstad Spectrum - it's a maxture of Amstrad CPC and the Spectrum software and hardware.

Despite appearances, the +2 was little more than a Sincial/128 with a bust in tape recorder and fins elicite to stop the custom chips roverheating, it's only been on the market for a little over a year, but I'm and will see the recorder as the contract of the second between the second of the second between the second of the seco

sure it will soon be replaced

The +2 sold around a quarter of a million units in the first year—probably less than Amstrad expected,

the +2 sold around a quarter or a million unites in the List year — probably less stant americal expected, but stiff quite an encouraging number. That figure, plus an allowance for marketing hype, probably explains Alan Sugar's prediction of half a making +3, sales. It's runcoved that Amstrag bought a million tacky \$15-01 posticks for a dollar each, colour-matched to sell with the Plus Two. That may explain why grey stocks are still being sold with the new alkalack Spectrum. At this rate, unless Alan Sugar can find something also to do with the nonstandard sticks, by have to keep the Spectrum in production at least full 1990 just to get shot of all those joysticks. Yuckl

NEW DIRECTION

The + 3 represents a major redesign of the Spectrum, it has lots of extra features, but a struct isotopier shan previous 128K versions. Older models retained comparability with the first Spectrums by tacking extra parts around she edges of the basic design – Sinciai's 128 was almost two computers in one box. The +3 keeps the same functions, but the internal design is much altered.

Amstrad has done a reasonable job of preserving compatability with older models, it helps that

Amstrad's labs are now run by Piritary Adwasser, who designed the original Spectrum for Uncle Olive in 1981. Adwasser was also responsible for the ZX-81 – the timy computer that needed a carton of max on the top to the event it overheating. (Interestingly, extra holes were purched into the ±3 power-supply).

box at a fate-stage, to stop it getting too hot.)

Several fasts have already come to fight in production versions of the ±3. It seems some of the tweaks introduced in the last days of Sinusair's work on the Spectrum have not been properly understood. by Amstrad's development team, and it may be a white till all the new marks are known and can be

I've summansed the +3's unique bugs in a separate panel. The problems are not too sknows Spectrom-users and suppliers have got around similar facilis in the past — that it's was that the snags become well-knows, so Amstractiona be encouraged to fix them and so that in the meantime existing users don't trip over them and lose confidence in the mactivine. If you find other incompatibilities, prease while in and tell us about

+47

The +3 marval and dirout board contain heavy hints that there will be a new version of the +2, with more Amstrad features and less of Sinctair's original design.

These technical clues suggest that the new machine will be a development of the +3, but it will work and locklike a +2, with a cassetted rive and a 64K RAM disk - 6K targer than that on the +3, but 10K smaller than onlother 12Bs.

I base that theory on two things. Firstly, the operating system in the latest Spectrum, ±300S, has been designed so workingthour a disk drive. Secondly, there are publish the historia that appear to be intended to supply power and signals to a cassatte unit identical to the one in the ±2.

Areastrad tends to build one circuit board for a range of computers; for instance, fire, PCW8256 contains the sockets and leads you need to turn it into an 8512. All you have to do is plug some extra

paras in

pags in I doubt there't be a dealer apprade – or downgrade – to replace the disk drive in current +3s with a cassette unit, but it seems clear that Amstrad intends to use the same board, stripped of a few parts, for a tape-based computer. Page 212 of the +3 manual contains a section headed "using +2005 without a Roppy disk." This explains that the ROM software, detived from Amstrad's earlier CPC range, does some the absence of the disk drive and reconfigure itself accordingly. The RAM disk, drive Mt, becomes the default drive and aftempts to access the Acid Bit drives give a "drive not found error.

I'm spire a cassette version of the +3 will be produced, though it's not clear whether Amstrad will self it as a +2cr as a new model. What is more interesting is whether or not the Spectrum will continue to be disclosured that that

to be developed after that.

Probably even Amstrad doesn't know that yet—I will depend up so sales of current made's, and the activity of other maintacturers.

MARKET AMSTROLOGY

The first point to make is that the price of the Spectrum is deliberately infrated at the moment. Out of curvosity I recently asked a make facturer to estimate the total component cost –including the disk, box, keyboard, manual and shipping – of a +3. After some research, he reckoned that Amstrad could bring +3 sints the UK for between £50 and £60. Chipportes are dising, and dealers and distributors must be allowed as lice of the cake, but Amstrad could surely make a healthy profit seiting the +3 at £150 or even less. Most rikely the price of the maximum will fall slowly, Amstrad wor'll rush to cut the price while the maximum is still selling. At £199 the +3 sintly UK competitions are the Commodore 64 and Atan ST The 64 is as old as the Spectrum, and is smillarly well-simported by chean software and addices. It has before regulates and

Specifically, and is smillarly well-supported by cheap software and addices. It has better graphics and several but less PAM and no built in disk.

The Afart ST boasts more colours and RAM but — despite Jack Trantiel's marketing hype – it's every bit as seuch a last-up as the ±3. The ST is probably worth the extra \$1,00 if you want to run serious.

programs, but 16-bit games software is still rate, expensive, and usually just a prettier variation on old. & bit themes.

Best themes.

The H-3 is aimed at the gentes-player or home user with a tight bridget. The ST is aimed at the yupphe who can afford to buy a frendy £300 machine as a toy — it's a disposable computer.

Computers are much more similar than manufacturers would have us believe; they all blow clouds of boloured dots around a TV screen, and they all user similar parts to do the job.

The real advantage of the Spectrum—as Amstrad knew well when it bought out Sinclair and screpped its own CPG range—is the vast range of cheap programs and add-ons already available for the machine, and joe thousands of people who have made a fiving by learning about the Spectrum and selling their available.

expertise.

Some products will disappear, and some people will move on to other machines, but the Sociair support industry is so vast that it is sure to continue we. Into the filinetres, Some of the big firms may only out, but few people will mids from.

We could see a return of the spirit of 182 and 183 with small firms deeting making by mail order, the may be bad news for window-shoppers, but could improve the quality and variety of new Spectrum software and encourage programmers to use the features of the 128. The extra RAM and parts have hardly been used yet, desprise the 128K versions of some major genes, big firms have stuck with 48K programs, lowest-common-denormalise products that every Spectrum-owner can buy.

The 128K tribes are rare now, but they're the way forward for the Spectrum. The +3's fast loading makes they products.

makes them practical

TECHONICHEDTECHONICHEDTECHON

OTHER MANUFACTURERS

There's no shortage of firms capable of building the Spectrum, It has been made, with verying degrees of licensing approval, and least seven countries. It's possible those machines could surface in the UK, and there's also a good chance that we'll see "Spectrum clones" — akin to copies of the IBM PC and Apple 2—from new manufacturers.

2 - from new manefacturers.
Sinclars's first computers were made in Scotland, all the Timex plant in Dundee. This led to a deal with Timex in the US, which had sold vast numbers of ZX-81's under the harne TMS-1000.
Timex obtained rights to the old Spectrum design, but added a sound chip, extra ROM and a new keyboard before launching the TMS-2068 in the 1983. This work it flooped in the United States, but hundreds of impusands were sold recently to the Potish government.

A action happens in Brazil, Microdigibal, the makers, started off building machines under ficence and later depoted to go it along, and there's said to be a Russian Spectrum for the Latin American market. As often happens in Brazil, Microdigibal, the makers, started off building machines under ficence and later depoted to go it along, and there's said to be a Russian Spectrum for the Control of the Potish for th

ROM RIGHTS

In practice things may not be so simple. The original 16X Spectrum ROM – the only part of the bush in software needed for compatibility – was written by a Cambridge matin firm. Nitre Tiles, According to the rather paundaced Pengum book *Sinclau And The Sumbe Technology*, Sinclair never agned a contract for the code. It is still not clear who counts the ROM the legal position is complicated anyway. Seven years ago a firm called Comp Shop copied the ROM than is linetain's ZX-80, in penduce a machine colled the Micro Ace. When the page come to could shollain was surply of the ZX-80 and the code in the Affect ACM was a copy of the ZX-80 code, because the pudge said be "could not see the code in the chip!." Sinclair eventually won with the argument that the Micro Ace keyboard – which the Judge could see – was a copy of the ZX-80 keyboard. It sees not have been, out he bases of that case, it would be quite possible to clone the ZX-80 keyboard. It sees not have been, out he base then:

Soon after that case Sinclair produced the ZX-81, which, like the Spectrum, incorporates a complicated custom chip. These chips are hard to copy because they do a lot of work in one unique package, but once you understand how they work it's not too tricky to assemble as equivalent circuit with other parts:

THE SUPERCLONE

For much of the last year, ar considerable secrecy, a team of experienced computer-designers has been

For much of the last year, in considerable secrecy, aleam of experienced computer designers has been hawking around the working prototype of a new 128K Spectrum design—a true Spectrum clone, with a larget price of £99.95, a faster processor and improved graphics. They need at least a milition pounds to start production, and have asked that their well-known company not be identified this sensitive financial negotations with a they made they backet are concluded. The superclone—ithas no firmsame yet—is designed very much in the Sinciais style, though it uses much more modern components. If has 128K of RAM, 32K of ROM, and a ZBOB processor that runsup to 70 per cent faciler than the Spectrum's ZBOA. The priototype's sound chip is the same as on the Amstrad/Sinciair 128 and Atan ST, the designers would prefer to fit a more modern stereo chip, but that may be a bad move if it reduces software compatibility.

The only differ chip on the main circuit board is a massive 84-pm 1800-gate logic array, which ties the system together and provides lots of 40 points. The display can appear just like a Spectrum with 256 x 192 dots and character square attributes, or you can have an 80-colour graphics mode, with eight independent ettributes for each row of dots in a character square. Cannes that use final mode should look impressive, with less block ficker than current Spectrum thes.

The norts on the machine include one standard sockel for a joystick or modes, a telephone socket for MIBI (mercial instrument) input as well as output, a cassette port, two network sockets similar to bot incompatible with the 2X network and outputs for sound, RGB/SCART, Composite video monitors, and PAL OHF telephones.

and PAL LiHF televisions.

There's also a light pen port which works properly, unlike previous Spectrum light-pen ports, as the There's also a light per port which works exoperly, unlike previous Spectrum light-per ports, as the clone's logic array contains two registers which let programs know the exact coordinate that is being scanzed by the TV at any time. This will be very useful for game programmers even if the light per isn't used. Most games have to wait for the start of a frame to be sure direy're not upsetting the display as it is drawn. The registers make such courtion unnecessary.

The final display direct is on a separate board, and is not needed if you're using a monitor — which imakes the machine, sheaperfor educational users, Sound is routed through the TV or the socket on the tack of the machine, there is no speaker inside.

Notifier serial nor parallel borts are standard, but an edge connector accepts simple Spectrum peripherals like the Specdrum, Kempotop jowstok and ROM cartridges. A smart cable larget price 50—can be used to connect that port to a Centronics printer.

The keyboard is like that of an Androit, but with fewer keys and no MicroScrees LOD display. At last

 — can be used to connect man part to a pentromis princer.
 The keyboard is like that of an Apricot, but with fewer keys and no MicroScreen LOD display. At last you can press a second key before releasing the first one; and the computer of Tireads both. Commands are typed in full, there's no keyword entry, internally the circuit is still based on the Spectrum's 40-key. gnd, with an extra eight keys in a new bank.

THE SUPERCLONE'S COMPATIBILITY

The supercione is highly compatible with Spectrum hardware – the sound, keyboard, cassette and display norts are in the same places, and the premory-map can be identical to a 48% Spectrum. 128

paging works differently on the superclose, albeit better.

The increased processor speed (6/MHz) is offset to some extent by contention from the video circuit, but program code still runs faster than on a normal Spectrum. This doesn't always affect games, which are often synchronised to each display frame so that they run of a constant speed regardless of how much they have to do onscreen.

The superclone's hardware designer claims total compatability, but I don't believe that. Theyen't found a game that doesn't work, 'heresponder' so Tech Tips will test that with a set of the most bud-

To bound against a town of the spectrum ROM, though in theory you can run any ROM, you like by saving a copy on tape and loading it into the superclone's ROM. It suspect that his claim is based on the use of such a technique. The pardware imposes so restitutions on memory-paging, and the display can be thin any 16k bank.

The superclone's rown ROM supports the most important Spectrum system catis—display, keyboard input and so on — with different code. Cassette fees use the Spectrum format but normally SAVE 50% faster than the Spectrum; the LOAD routine analyses the tone at the start of each file and automatically adusts to said the speed of the tecording.

faster than the Spectrum, the LOAD routice analyses the tone at the start of each file and automatically adjusts to soft the speed of the recording. The supercione has a new fast BASIC, adepted to resemble Section BASIC. Andy Wright, of BetaBASIC fame, do consistant on that part of the project. Present plans mean it may not be possible to LOAD ZX. BASIC programs directly, unless you first load a page of RAM with a dopy of Simbler's ZX BASIC ROM. The internal format is altered to give greater, speed and allow programs to break Sicolar's 40K hint. Supercione BASIC programs can be as big as your RAM. The disk system for the machine is still in development, but shouldn's be a problem – the company developing the handwise already has two Spectrum disk interfaces to its credit. The planned and for the supercione is controlled (Breckly from the logic arity, comes with protible 128K of RAM, and costs tips same as the computer 599.95. The impressive thing is the capacity; getting on for two megabytes on standard disk, using a new type of half-height 3.5 inch drive. half-height 3.5-inch drive

FUTURES

N's early days yet—though the supercloners have been working on their muchine for 18 months, and some of the details are sure to change when the money comes through and production starts. It seems unlikely that the machine will be on sale before the sammer of 1988, and it may take longer still if Amstradiattempts to detay it in the courts. But the designers are confident of their legal position, though they wouldn't mind a bit of unintentional promotional help from Amstrad. It's all very exciting



+3 FAULTS

REPORTS of +3 problems are coming in thick and fast. I'm still not sure whether program incompatibilities stem from misloads or hardware faults, but it seems Aristrad has introduced extra screadry in the +3 that banishes the Spectrum's old tolerance of tape recorders. Gaps on tape fiff with noise as if a level-control circuit were working overtime. If anyone has a cure for this – or can tell me what to disconnect - please wrise in!

These are the more specific problems

1 MISSING VECTORS

Sinclair's Spectrum 128 contained a table of addresses so that you could call routines in the editor ROA without worrying about changes between versions of the computer. The Sinclair documentation said it was important to use those addresses to preserve compatability with future machines. The error-handling routine, at address \$1303 in the Spectrum main ROM, attempts to page in the

+2 RGM on the +:

It fails, as you might expect? This causes problems for programs that call the code directly.

Alan Giles of Tixee Inch Software has got two drives on los. + 3, and reports that while CDPY Alto 8:

warks fine, copying the other way does nothing at all. This is because drive B: is never set up in the second case, so the system copies a zero-sized disk—a brief and pointless process.

A more serious bug crops up when you COPY files from drive to drive with a large program or machine code in memory. The file COPY routine uses a 2K buffer to store the information of is copying, but, unfortunately that further is stored in RAM bank 0 at address 60689—on top of the last 5K of BASIC workspace, corrupting your program or data.

The +3 manual suggests that no one knew quide where the buffer would go when the machine was documented. 'Note that the +3's COPY command may well use buffers in the second screen area' it says on page 189. The second screen is page 7, and could be moved in place of the area presently clobbered - but that doesn't happen on current machines.

When the Spectrum cante out it was criticised for the slow speed of its BASIC. That's always seemed rather until to me, especially as ZX BASIC has many timesoving friendly features - not forgetting variable values when you edit a line, for instance, in any case, the bodges and patches added over the years have slowed down + 3 BASIC.

In tests with a new +3 and my old Issue I Spectrum I found that ZX BASIC runs between 30% and 40% slower In +3 BASIC than in 48% BASIC, it's worth bearing this in mind if you're programming a disk Spectrum, especially as you still can't enter more than 41% of program and data, even in +

4 MISSED CONNECTIONS

The ± 3 has an edge connector at the track which looks like the one on earlier Spectrums, but The HS has an edge connector at the back which looks like the one on earlier Spectrums, but appearances are deceptive. The video signals are no longer present and, more importantly, the 9V power supply used by some perpherals is missing, as is the 5V supply. Lockly the main regulated 5V rail is still there, so simple interfaces can still run from the Spectrum's internal power. The most important missing signals are IORQGE, which used to let you turn off the logic array, and ROMCS, which disables the computer's ROM so an external device can supply atternative code. Nothing with its own ROM will work on the 43 unless it's redesigned – this includes most clever things. It is Multilague, internal results and the supply atternative of the Multilague.

things, like Multilaces, Microdinies, the VTX modem and Ourah Microspecch. A new Multilace is already available for the +3, but the required charges make it Incompatible with older machines. It would take quite a complicated adapter, connected to the edge connector, to fix this problem.

and allowold devices to be plugged in. In theory Amstrad could reverse this incompatibility in future machines, as the ROMCS line has not been used for anything else



DEBUZZING **THE 128**

IF you own a Spectrum 128 there's a fair chance rt provisices a few extra runwanted sounds through the TV speaker as well as the usual repertoices of bleeps and hisses, it's common to find that one setting of the TV tuner gives a crystal-clear sound and a fizzy or black-end-write patture, while another lunking gives a good proture but noisy sound if your +2 suffers from this problem, this

The noise crops up because of the way sound and vision are transmisted to the TV. Broadcast TV uses two different channels, with a fixed frequency gap between the sound and the vision for each station. And the size of the gap varies between European countries

Computers use a silver pax of tricks modulator.— to convert their signals so that they resemble a broadcast and can be picked up by a TV. 48K Spectrums produce a picture bull no sound librough a TV. Their sound effects come from a tray earpieca, sublish to the 'speaker' ma telephone, mounted on the circuit board.

the same depends among the control board.

The first modified on the control board.

The first modified shove this parpiece from the SV power that supplies the computer logic, but this gave very hitle withter and could speed the logic. Issue 3 Spectram sound is powered by the ASK Spactrum so called SV supply, which savintly turns out acound 11 volts? This makes things fouder without disturbing the rest of the computer, but the earpiece is still eather fieldle. Sinclin realiged they'd have to do sometime, before me the sound chip that can play up to three notes at once, with 15 possible volume levels for each note. The answer was to throw out the earpiece and to send the sound to the TV. This works fine, as long as the computer is set up to use exactly the right gap between the video and sound channels.

After two weeks with a noisy 1-2, Tech Tipster John Parlate threw causion and warranty to the wind. This is how he stopped the background.

wind. This is how he stopped the background noise. The operation is simple—if yest involves tweaking a screwinside the computer—but your guarantee may not be bonoured if anyone notices that you have been fiddling unide the machine. It individes the service of the computer is the computer of the service of in doubt, leave it alone or get a professional to do

GETTING INSIDE IT

The first step is to unplug the computer, turn it upskie down and sections the screvs holding the base. Pul tine screws somewhere safe and turn the +2 over, gently larg the keyboard siney from the base. Reconcect the power and hold down the BREAK key so that the TV Test display appears. There are no dangerous voltages inside the +2, but it is inwise to touch the excustry while you've got the box open
Tune in the TV to give a clear perture, without

worrying about the sound. It may be sensible to leave the machine for a few minutes, especially d you've only just started using a, so that the tuning

can settle as a warms up. The test display is accompanied by beeping Jahn lound that he could time the sound in administrating a screw in the silver box mounted on the circuit boxed, directly under the left-hand stillt key. You may find if helps to turn the scraw with a praste blade as metal screwdowers can disturb the proof. One setting of this screw gives near-perfect, buzz free sound through the TV

If you re uncortain about fiddling around inside the machine you may be able to get good results by connecting the LINE IN or AUDIO IN sockets of a video or music centre to the SOAPPO or EAR socket on the back of the computer. If you're lucky except to own a video monitor this is probably the only way you can get sound out of your Spectrum 128.

THAT'S INTERFERENCE

These tips should help if your TV can aready be tuned to give clear sound with a fuzzy picture, but they're unit-ply to make much deference if you busy is onesety to make much consented by you got interference all the time — even when you connect an amplifier to the sound socket on the back of the I+2 in thick case the problem is probably caused by interference between the 4.2 is casette recorder and the sound circuit.

As I noted in CRASH Issue 38, you can often the thick the sound circuit.

cure this problem by putting a switch in the red wire from the computer crout boars to the cassette unit, The switch lets you cat of power to the cassette stopping the interference except when you turn the tape three exin order to use 4. Of course you can kiss your guarantee goodbye if you make this modification?

MOUSE TALES

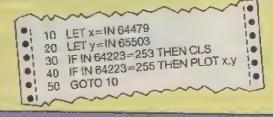
THIS MONTH'S £30 software prize goes to Andrew Haslam, who's sent in a wonderfully concise program that illustrates exactly how to control BASIC program with a mouse.

Andrew read about Peul Cotton's Kempston Mouse problems in Issue 46, he has discovered three

IN commands that let you read the mouse position and both battons from BASIC or machine code. The listing is his program – a trivial drawing routing, where the left button lifts the 'pen' off the screen and the right button clears the display. It's not really useful as it stands, but it's a good starting point for

According to Andrew, the program works with the Kempston Mouse and its clones; I haven't got the right Interface to be able to test it.

IN 64479 reads the horzontal position of the mouse, and IN 65503 gives the vertical position. The two buttons are read with IN 64223, which gives 252 if both are pressed, 253 for the right button only and 254 for the left button. You get 255 if neither button is pressed.





NICHELTECHENICHELTECHENICHEL

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256 x 192 mono, 32 x 192, 16 colour attributes

80 x 25 characters, two cokers only Built-In ports: RGB/SCART, composite video, PAL UHF TV light pen, cassette, network,

AFADRI

I'VE HAD several letters recently from readers who have bought Roboro's Wajadrives. These draws – sort of scaled up Microdrives – reached the several F120 but

direct – sort of scaked up Microditives – reached the market three years ago at a price of £130, but they didn't sell well and Nothmics went bust in 1986. The drives have recently been sold of cheaply wa Microfairs and mail order. The Wafaddive mechanism was not developed by Rotronics but by two farge firms, Astec and BSR. Astec makes the silver TV modulators in recist computers and conscies, among other things, and BSR makes thirdables. The drives were designed for use in industrial machines, so they be reliable but rather stow. The Rotronics particate includes two drives nitis speat and package includes two drives, plus senal and

The biggest problem when using the Waladrive is that it steals more than 2K of the Spectrum's immore associate you turn the interface on. Many disk and hips systems steal memory, but the Waladrives is the greekest and most inflexible five nome across, it uses the area fram address 237554 to address 25045, and many popular games and utilities want to put code in that area. Unless you're a high-powered hacker, there are only rivo ways to lead programs that use the memory smalehed by the Waladrive. The cheapest but most fiddly aption is to use

The cheapest but most fieldly aption is to use 007 Mullagy, a sollection of upility programs from ZX Guaranteed (061 766/5712) which chop programs up and shulfle them around in themsely so that they don't disturb the drive

The best, that expensive, option is Romards: Robust's Matillace One, which does the whole job at the press of a huston. Both techniques wildonly transfer #6K programs – the Wafadrive doesn't with with a Spachrum 128

WAFA SPEED

Wafadnyes aren't very fast, but you can get takely good results if you understand a hit about the way they work. Wafadrives use a communicial loop of tape. He Microdines The data is stored wildling the tape and read off in 1K humps, this means you may have to wait for the tape to go all the way round before a file starts to load.

The data is megh less densely packed than on a Microdovie. This improves reliability but slows things down - it can take up to 45 seconds to find a file on a 128k Wafe, though 20 seconds is more typical. Wafes come in three sizes: 15K, 64K and 128k. The 16K Wafe is fastest; and is said, the sounds in about three seconds is much the

128K. The 16K Wafa is fastest, and assemy responds in about three seconds — much the same speed as a 98K Michodrive cartridge. The exact position of files on the Wafa determines how long frely take to load, filest programs lead in several parts, and it's viol to record file parts in sequence on the tape is you want files to load quickly without time-wasting searching for the next file, You can ensure this by reformating a tape before use, then eaving each file with this sequence of commands.

SAME **LAMME"* VERIFY **ANAME"* CAT # Don't use any other commands between SAMEs. Don't use any other commands between SAVES to that Wafa, or you'll distorb the position of the

WAFA BUGS

There were two minor but annoying bugs in the ROM software built into the first \$0.000 Waladrives; as far as I know their soldon ail the drives sold in the UK. You can't save files just one byte borg - this may not seem a major problem, but some tapes use such likes as part of their profection system, making their, difficult to transfer to a Wata. It's also impossible to save the byte at address 65535, the lest byte in memory, 007 Multispy and the Multiface avoid this expeditions.





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OYD MANGRAM

LOOKBACK-

RENDS noticeable in 1985 and 1986 continued not only unabated

RENDS noticeable in 1985 and 1986 continued not only unabated throughout 1987, but even accelerated; and most major software houses frented with licences and conversions. There are some very good reasons why coin-op aroade games should find their way onto home micros – about the same sorts of reasons why good novels find their way onto the TV and cinema screen – but good reasons aren't enough alone; just as books can be ruined in their adaption, so can aroade originals in their conversion.

Licences are really much harder to defend, since the source is frequently unsuited to a computer game theme, and if it wasn't so often sed, it would be an amusing sport to watch frantic programmers desperately struggling to pick on something in 'their' film on which they might hang a reasonable game. During 1987 the commercial notion that a 'name', whether it be a famous person, incident, book or fictitious character, can sell a computer game, whether it be good, Indifferent or poor, took a much firmer hold. It's a cynical notion, that reckons people are so guillible that because they adored Rombo Clone Wars starring Amoid Stalnegger at the chiema, they'll go out in their droves and by the licensed game from Slipshodsoft without waiting to see whether it's any good or not.

yet 1987 has seen at least one major software house come to terms with its reputation for unevenly implemented licences and tackle the problem in the only sensible way – place more stress on better game design, programming and, most importantly, better playtesting. A pointer to the future, and a hope, perhaps, that the more professional this industry becomes, the better the product may be, rather than poorer and less nation.

less canng.

The other 8-bit trend, most noticeable with Spectrum software, has been the growth of budget labels and titles. Had CRASH opted for a "budget review ghetto" a few months back, as had been internally suggested, then today there would be few pages of reviewel No-one has quite agreed yet whether the burgeoning budget is a Good Thing or a 8ad One. On the whole the quality of budget releases is still universely poor when you consider how many there are, and despite the notable exceptions Mastertronic (in its various guises) and Code Masters have alven us occasionally. given us occasionally

given us occasionary.

The saving grace has been the sheer size of the 8-bit market. Software houses don't yet seem prepared to let full-price games stip away, and tronic as it may be, the advent of a 16-bit market with competitively priced machines like the Atari ST providing a real afternative for upgrading, is likely to force companies to produce even better Spectrum and CBM64 games to maintain the 8-bit sales.

Bearing all this in mind, let's take a trip down cliché lane and rip through some of the good times and some of the bad of 1987 . . .

JANUARY

AFTER a prestigious launch with The Art Studio and some complex music utilities, British Telecom's Rainbird label had remained Reinbird label had remained quiescent on the Spectrum, now it kicked off the New Year with two Smashes, Starglider and Jewels Of Darkness. The 48K Starglider was hailed as 'amongst the best games to grace the Spectrum', but it was the 128K version that kept the office minions working after hours, and rated at 97%, it was one of the highest Smashes ever. Written by Realtime Software (3-D Tank Duel, Starstrike), it featured incredibly fast 3-D vector graphics, an assortment of enemies to kill as well numerous missions to be undertaken.
Rainbird gave it the VIP treatment from its lavish packaging to a 64-page novelette which gave clues as to how the game should be played.

version featured on the TV programme Get Fresh. So impressive was Starglider that since then it has reversed natural trends to be converted into an arcade machine. It has been arcade machine. It has been Reinbird's only arcade game to date, but the company has become noted for its adventures. They took over veterans Level 9 Computing and Jewels Of Darkness was a compilation of three of Level 9's early hits, Adventure, Adventure

Quest and Dungeon Adventure, Each game was revamped with improved text and the addition of

improved text and the addition of graphics. Once again Rainbird packaged it lavishly with a short novella by Peter McBride. The compilation was highly recommended by Derek.

The undead were dragged into the Spectrum's 3-D isometric sphere with Nosferatu, liberased from the silent Twenties film of the same name. Pitting the player against the dastardly demonvampire, Nosferatu consisted of three main stages, the middle one vampre, Nosterati consisted of three main stages, the middle one of which had the player controlling three characters! The game was an Instant Smash with reviewers, which was nice for Design Design who wrote it, and for Macmillan's fledgling label, Pirenha, who marketed it.

marketed it.

Piranha's second release of the month, Reque Trooper, again programmed by Design Design, and based on the comic-book hero made famous in 2000 AD, wasn't received with quite the same enthuslasm as Nasferatu. Comments ranged from 'too boring' to 'I could play this game for hours', but one aspect all the reviewers agreed on was that it was just too easy to play.

Other licensed games of the month included Marble Madness. Tarzan and Space Harrier, Marble Madness clones had been floating

Tarzan and Space Harrier. Marble Madness clones had been floating around for months, many faiting to impress. Melbourne House tried topping the lot by releasing the Marble Madness Construction Set. The inclusion of a screen designer did little to push its ratings up and many felt it was a poor effort when compared with poor effort when compared with Gyroscope, a previous variant on the same theme also by Melbourne House.

Martech's Tarzan had you hurtling through the jungle in a loin cloth in a bid to rescue your beloved Jane from the hands of the Usanga tribe. We recognised that it contained some pretty pictures but at 73% overall the depression of the product of game was nothing special. Neither was Elite's enxiously awaited conversion of the arcade hit Space conversion of the arcade hit Space Harrier, which projected the Midlands company into the New Year on a continuing spate of licensed arcade games. In truth most aspects of Space Harrier were reasonable, but it wasn't ideally suited to the Spectrum, and without the original's moving cabinat, the came seemed to lose. cabinet, the game seemed to lose something and came out with a score of 77%.

The Edge started 1987 with Fairlight II: Trial Of Derkness, sequel to the 1985 Smash Fair-light. What seemed destined to be ight, what seemed destined to be a hit failed to live up to our expectations, failing short of a Smash with 81%. Author Bo Jangeborg was praised for the the highly detailed two-colour graphics, but was criticised for the game's slowness and the extreme similarity that it bore to Fairlight. Just going to show that graphics maketh not a game.

Microsphere's first release for quite some time. Could they keep up the standard set by eerlier hits such as Skool Daze and Back To Skool? Contact Sam Cruise certainly did nothing to harm Microsphere's Image as a

producer of original, high quality software: A Smash with 93%, software: A Smash with 93%, Contact Sam Cruise, written by Dave Reldy, was cradited with having a Reymond Chandler having a Reymond Chandler flavour about it, as the player roamed the city streets trying to solve a case while avoiding gangland heavies partial to a bit of the solution.

Pete Cooke scored his first hit of the year for CRL with Academy the long awaited sequel to Tau Ceti. Following in the same vein as Its predecessor, Academy set tasks of varying difficulty for the player to overcome. The game also included an option to define your own skimmer, but as weight had to be taken into consideration it was impossible to equip yourself as an indestructable super as an indestructable super fortress. Described as 'amazingly good', Academy was Smashed at 92%. Pete Cooke's programming abilities seemed to have improved with his last few games, and as it turned out, Academy was not to be his last hit in 1987.

FEBRUARY

FEBRUARY deluged the Towers under an avalanche of software -obviously lots of Christmas releases that had just missed the seasonal deadline. It seemed to be the month of the tie-in with Gauntlet and Top Guntopping the bill. Incidently a third of February's releases came from either US Gold, Imagine or Ocean, it was also the first time in CRASH history also the line statement of the that the ratings system was overhauled to bring it more in line with the times. From February forth the reviewers' comments would be credited with their

After months of clones and poor imitations the official US Gold conversion of Gauntiet arrived, and blasted away the competition Smashed with an overall of 92% Gauntlet was a great game and one not to be missed. To accommodate the original's great size the programmers had elected to use a multiload system to expand the game's potential - not expand the game's potential - not the first time a Smashed game had used this system and certainly not the last. Nevertheless even with this system the graphics were not very impressive. Where Gauntiet differed from many of its Imitators was with its simultaneous two-player cotion, not chite as much player option, not quite as much fun as the four-player original but nevertheless a vast improvement on the one-player, antisocial clones, and a huge saving in 10ps. Electric Dreams's first release

of the year was a licensed game based on the scary movie Allens. The player controlled Ripley, four space marines and an android as they entered the Allen Queen's egg-laying chamber to kill her. The graphics were neat and it certainly had almosphare, but thankfully had atmosphere, but thankfully the game wasn't as gory as the film. We had no real comptaints but just felt that it wasn't quite good enough to warrant a Smash.

Ocean fared a touch better with their film licence, the fine aerial doglight simulator Top Gun, which tested the player's flying abilities to the hilt. Although it lacked Tom Cruise, and while the graphics were simplistic vector affairs, the



made these shortcomings in its gamepley. The player chased the computer's plane through the heavens, trying to gun it down before it got you. If this became boring then a two-player option allowed for head-tohead combat with your best friend. Yet another hit game which proved that playing computer games isn't

necessarily antisocial.
Eccentric tre-in of the month awards went to The Archers and Dankey Kong, The Archers was released by Mosaic, but it was the skillful programming by the bunch at Level 9 that turned what was potentially a very dull game into an enjoyable experience. The object actually to keep up the longwas actually to keep up the long-running radio show's audience ratings. As with Adrian Mole, also released by Mosaic, you didn't have to input replies but were given a number of options to choose from Strangely, although its overall rating was 90% it wasn't a Smash, probably an oversight between editorial and art, rather than Derek's intention.

Ocean's Donkey Kong was an oddity because they had released Kong some years previously. In those dim and distant days people didn't seem to bother so much with the proprieties officensing, so perhaps. Ocean thought it was time to redress the balance and do It properly. In the event, this version was licensed from the Nintendo arcade machine, and while the reviewing minions thought it a good conversion, they also felt that it was just a few years

Speaking of Ocean, February saw them releasing Highlandar, another game based, although loosely, on a film. Programmed by Canvas (the splinter from Denton Canvas (the splinter from Denton Designs), it centred on only one aspect of the film, the fight sequences. You played the part of McLeod set against three opponents, Ramirez (very strange as he was McLeod's friend in the film), Fizir and Kurgen (the mighties of the bunch), and each character had to be leaded separately. On the whole it was a disappointing product that bore disappointing product that bore little resemblance to events in the excellent and quirky film.

Imagine released a real clutch of games including Yie Ar Kung Fu If Super Soccer and Konami's Golf. Probably best of the bunch was Tena Cresta, yet another coin-op conversion. This shootem-up with its vertically scrolling format bore a striking resemblance to that old arcade bare favourite, Xevious, the Spectrum conversion of which US Gold also released in the same month but it got a lower rating. Graphically

Terra cresta was nothing special, but shoot-'em-ups can always be great fun and this was no. exception. Given an 81% rating, it was felt to be just a touch too expensive, considering what you

Torus, the programmers of Gyron and the Spectrum version of Elite, unveiled their third game, Hive on the Firebird Gold label Set on the insect-populated planet of Gamma V, the player penetrated the hive's complex defences to eliminate the Queen at the centre of a network of tunnels, and needed to find a laser and other assorted goodies such as key cards to gain admittance into areas sited about the tunnels. We were divided in our opinions of We were divided in our opinions of the latest Torus game. Some thought it looked impressive but lacked enough real excitement to make it brilliant, while Ben felt that the game would become a cult. I guess Ben's prophetic powers aren't fully developed yet... Impressiball, narrowly, missed

Impossaball narrowly missed out on Smash status by receiving 89%. Written by newcomer to the Spectrum John Philips and marketed by Hewson, it had the player guiding a bouncing ball down eight progressively harder corridors. The scrolling of the graphics was excellent, and in graphics was excellent, general the whole package was very polished, but it just lacked that little something that turns a good game into a Smash.

Then spring arrived . . .

MARCH

AFTER flushed February mordant March was most notable for its absence of good software. Perhaps the spring hadn't quite sprung then.

Most games released hovered around the sixties mark with Feud and Ranarama standing head and shoulders above the rest.

The major event of the month was the take over of veteran Melbourne House by budget software giants Mastertronic for a claimed seven-figure sum. Both software houses still published under their own names with Melbourne House occupying the full-price range and Mastertronic concentrating its labels on the budget marki

In a doubtful attempt to prove they were still in operation, Melbourne House finally released Judge Dredd. Based on one of comics' most famous cult characters from 2000 AD, it was always going to be a risky licence in the eyes of Dredd fans, and perhaps Melbourne House took it

In entirely the wrong direction. It was basically a platform game with the player jumping around the screen shooting perpetrators (perps to the cognoscenti) who threatened Mega City One. Judge Dredd was inevitably a great disappointment to CRASH Towers, especially after waiting so long for it. The comic stories provided plenty of scope for a game but Melbourne House faited to implement any elements that made the strip a hit.

Perhaps we could be kinder to shooting screen

Perhaps we could be kinder to Melbourne House's second March release? Fist II, sequel to The Way of the Exploding Fist, set you the task of finding a temple, entering it thus making invincible, and overthrowing the invincible, and overthrowing the, evil Warlord who ruled your land with terror. Sadly, we couldn't, Expectations ran high but the game didn't quite deliver the goods. Despite the 16 fight moves stratistically the particular high pathyrone. available, the action in between fight sequences was dull, and it gave the impression of being very

mundane.

mundaria.

Programmed by Binary Design and released by Mastartonic's Buildog Software label, Feudwas one of the highspots of the month. Playing the part of one of two feuding medieval brothers, the object was to run around the playing area collecting ingredients to mix spells and potions which playing area consening ingressions to mix spells and potions which created havoc for your elbling. Feud was the first Buildeg release, and further showed how Budget games were coming of age. At £1.99 the game provided excellent value for money, with large, well animated graphics and the real bonus of gameplay which really kept the player on his toes. Greyfell was the first release for

construction of Greyfall, and perspective world of Greyfall, and by stomping on meanies to kill them, and by collecting useful objects, did you have a chance of ridding the land of the wizard's bateful influence. Greyfall was well presented but its gameplay left a

ot to be desired.

After eons of waiting Activision's The Little Computer People (LCPs) finally emerged from our Spectrums, atthough it transpired that only 128K machines were big enough for them to inhabit. Your emember the steep not so much a name rigge, a story; not so much a game more a way of life, the package supposed that Pet People were little beings who lived inside your (128K) computer, and you responsible for feeding Were keeping them happy. Each pethad its own personality and preferences, and simple keyboard instructions could request the pet to do things such as play records, take a bath or play a game with you on its (128K) computer.

But it had taken too long in coming out on the Spectrum and excitement created Initially by the CBM 64 disk version had wom off. Novel it may have been, but the Spectrum's limitations imposed on the program made it less flexible, and in truth it was a touch testions. tedious.

Ever one for turning principles into frogs, Steve Turner took the Geuntlet theme a step further for Hewson with Ranarama. Much in

the same vein as the original, Ranarama expanded on the idea and improved it a great deal. Turner, author of *Dragontorc* and Quazatron among others, cast the player as Mervyn, a failed sorcerer's apprentice who, by a series of miscast spells, ends up in amphibian form. The castle has been overrun by evil warlocks and other assorted unpleasantries and Mervyn must save the day by annihilating them, and restoring himself to human form in the process. Its presentation differed from Gauntlet, fitting more than one room on screen at a time, and while the graphics were good the animation tended to get a bit messy at times. But once again it was the highly addictive gameplay that made this game a Smash for Hewson.

On the down side, Brian Clough's Football Fortunes, which had teatured on the Christmas Special cover, enjoyed less favour than fortune, with 42% for CDS, occasioning comments typical of many hybrid board/computer games reviews before it - it seemed the software side had

been neglected.

US Gold's Masters Of The Universe licence hit rock-bottom, white Lelsure Genlus fared only slightly better with the licence they had been working on for well over a year, Scalextric. Electric Electric Dreams, too, seemed to be a software house in search of success after its pre-Christmas launch; Explorer, the game boasting a ludicrous 40 billion mappable screens, and Tempest, the wire-frame shoot-'em-up from the arcades, failed to impress

Fortunately Thère. highlight though, and undeubtedly the event of the month was an interview with Bernie Drummond and Jon Ritman, the men behind the hit game Batman, which gave the reviewing team their first glance at Head Over Heels - but more of that in a moment.

APRIL

THE APRIL issue of CRASH saw some spring-cleaning at the Towers. Founding editor and allround slave-driver Roger Kean was taken off the mantiepiece, given a good dusting and reinstated at the helm while Graeme Kidd departed with the wintry weather for the editorship of trendy magazine LM. Hannah Smith departed from the Playing Tips for the sweet smell of pastures new, and a newcomer to these hallowed pages was Richard Eddy, who made the transition from AMTIX! to CRASH reviewer with the minimum amount of fuss besides the odd cry of 'bwah, monster' and his driller killer laugh.

US Gold's CBM 64 hit Leader Board finally made it on a Spectrum green, it took us all hours of persuasion to dissuade Roger Kean from donning his fial cap and awful houndstooth-check plus-fours and giving it a bash. Leader Board was the very best golfing simulation we had seen. Featuring a four-player option, budding golfers could play on any of four 18-hole courses with three levels of play. Notorious for their boredom factor, reviewers don't look forward to gotting look forward to golfing simulations, but Leader Board surpassed all past expectations, and although a bit slow to play at the start, perseverance resulted in an enjoyable game which got 80%.

A strong contender for game of the year was Head Over Heels released by Ocean and written by the duo Ritman and Drummond. It had the reviewers raving.

Set in a far away galaxy, four planets ruled by the tyrannical Emperor (from the planet Blacktooth) are in turnoil. Two spies from the planet Freedom have been sent to provoke revolution and recover the lost crowns from the slave planets Head Over Heels utilised the isometric forced perspective now commonplace. It led to an immediate comparison with the earlier Batman as well, but Ritman and Drummond injected much into the stale format. For a start the spies Head and Heels, separated at the start, had different abilities, and were controlled as separate units or could be united to perform tesks that each alone could not. Added to this novel approach were the many puzzles, collection of objects whose purposes were not immediately apparent, and the marvellous arcade action. Head Over Heels more than adequately proved that good computer games do not depend merely on appearances but on game design as well, and it certainly deserved its rare accolade, a Smash at 97%.

Breakout games enjoyed a and lmagine's Arkanoid received an overall score

This souped-up version of the ancient hit, despite some odd programming which made some of it idiosyncracies a bit hard to handle, proved to be thoroughly addictive. After five years the game hadn't made any major improvements on the original, but just went to show that some games never die, they simply get rewritten. The review led to a battle when many readers, homfled at the low rating, attacked in the Forum, a light which was to hot up in the following month when Gremlin Graphic's version, Krakout, received a higher percentage.

Breakout was not the only golden oldie to be rewritten this month with the advent of Classic Muncher from Bubble Bus, a variant on the well worn Pacman theme. Consisting of six infinitely repeating screens, Classic Muncher played exactly like its inspiration, and while bringing back flashes of nostalgia, it did little to impress, scoring miserable 41%

Telecomsoft's first Smash of the year came in the form of Firebird Silver's I, Ball. At £1.99 it provided astounding value for money, and after some tediously sub-average product, showed that Firebird still had it in them to produce an excellent low-cost game and give Masterronic a run for their budgels. Most notable was the excellent digilised speech, best heard through some sort of amplifier as the Spectrum's own the state of the spectrum's own the state of the spectrum's own the spectrum's own the state of the spectrum's own the spectrum's own the spectrum's own the spectrum's own the spectrum's spectrum's own the spectrum's spectru inbuilt buzzer wasn't really up to it. The gameplay was terrific and it had us all addicted within a short

If addiction be the food of love, then indigestion is much the same as repeating things - we had Elite's Bombjack II, which didn't do too badly at 71% but failed to satisfy as much as its predecessor had done, there was The Growing Pains Of Adrian Mole from Mosaic (but marketed by Virgin Games this time round), which did almost as well as its ancestor at 88%, and there was Software Projects, striking back with Escape From Singe's Castle: Dragon's Lair II, which also did pretty well with 83%, in each case the game was more than reasonable, but the surfeit may have caused the reviewers to sicken. It looked like it was time for May . . .

MAY

MAY'S edition of CRASH was a bit fat as spring/summer issues go due to the inclusion of a glant 32-page Playing Tips bonanza page Playing Tips bonanza levingly compiled by yours truly over many sleepless nights. Past years had always seen the so-called summer slump, but May managed to produce a remarkably good crop of games from a surprisingly large selection, including the latest releases from both Firebird and Ultimate.

Over 24 months Activision had

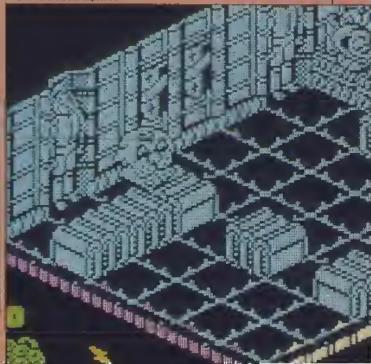
not found much success with its Spectrum games but with the advent of Enduro Racer they set the record straight. Licensed from the arcade machine of the same name and programmed by Giga Games, it followed the original closely. The object of this bikerace game was very simple - outrace the other bikers and complete each course in the quickest time possible. Each course contained different backdrops with logs. rocks and opponent racers acting rocks and opponent racers acting as obstacles. Race games have always been firm favourites with the public and each year they improve in Ingenuity, Enduro Racer lodged its way firmly amongst the greats of this type.

After Silver, it was Gold's turn; following hot on the heels of the budget I, Ball, Firebird secured themselves a second Smash in as many months. Costly at £9.95, The Sentinel still provided wonderful value for money. Once again we

value for money. Once again we had a game that had been a huge hit on the CBM 64, and had then nt on the CBM 64, and had then taken an age to appear on the Spectrum, but the Implementation was finely tuned. The deunting task of rescuing 10,000 planets from the Sentinel and its Sentries through a process of power absorption, offered the player a same of the weekful behave its game of thoughtful, chess-like strategy – where much consideration had to go into each move to ensure success - and sometimes furious activity. originality and the sheer depth of



Our hero Heels explores



play made it a winner.

Martianoids was Ultimate's first release of the year – and for some time. A 3-D forced perspective game, it cast the player in a defensive role with lasers for protection against marauding Martianoid machines. The tide had been slowly turning against Ultimate over a period, and Martianoids was criticised for below-standard graphics and poor gamaplay, receiving only 58%. And it wasn't the only disappointment in May: World Games from US Gold/Epyx didn't quite live up to expectations either. Like Winter Games it was divided into several events with the player having to wait what seemed an etermity for individual events to load, its graphics didn't impress as much as had its predecessor's, but it was otherwise an adequate sports simulation.

Indigestion was narrowly avoided by Gremfin Graphics when they released Auf Wedersehen Monty, latest in the long line of Monty Mole games which had started back in 84 with Wanted: Monty Mole. Written by Monty's creator, Peter Harrap it followed his usual style of game, a complex platformer with devious traps and neat graphics and sound. It also sparked off a controversy within the reviewing ranks between those who were bored stiff of Monty, and those who still reckened a game could be good despita its formulaic convention. The latter won out and Auf Wiedersehen Monty got 85% as Monty trekked across Europe to buy himself a nice Greek island so that he could be safe trom the prying attentions of intermole, the international crime lighting organisation. But in that missing five percent that would nave made it a Smash like the previous Harrap. 'Monty' games, perhaps there was a buried message that the formula was risking staleness.

formula was risking stateness.

Ocean hoped to give everyone a pleasant shook with Short Circuit, based somewhat loosely on the movie, it contained two distinct garnes, an arcade-adventure and a chase sequence. The arcade-adventure saw the hero-robot Number Five searching offices for extra parts and a means of escape, while the chase sequence, staged on a horizontally scrolling background, had him attempting to reach a van at the end of the track and escape to further adventures. Unfortunately the shock was more of a tingle, for despite the above-average graphics, the game suffered from tie-in-itis, a failure to pinpoint the film's best aspects.

In a bygone age Gitsoft released the marvellous Quill, a machine code utility which acted as a writing system for those who wanted to create adventures but couldn't program. Later they gave us the Quill Illustrator, and between them they supplied many a good game but were equally responsible for an influx of many bad ones. In 1987 Gitsoft excelled themselves and achieved a Smash with The Professional Adventure Writer, or PAW as it became known. A continuation of adventure writing systems, PAW was extremely well documented, making it much easier to use than

existing systems. As with many adventure writers, graphics could be drawn, but *PAW* really came into its own with its handling of vocabulary. Derek Brewster gave it 97% – and made it must for hopeful adventure programmers.

hopeful adventure programmers. Reeling from the shock of a Firebird budget Smash the month before. Mastertronic hit back through their M.A.D. label with the peculiarly named Amaurote—and they got a Smash too. In Amaurote—you freed sectors of a city from invading insect armies, destroying the Queen before she could produce more insect warriors and overwhelm you. Binary Design's highly original monochromatic graphics made it look sturning. It was both playable and addictive and, in 128K mode, boasted extraordinarily atmospheric music which Ben Stone kept playing until we all felt like lasering him Into oblivion.

For two years Mike Singleton had held Derek Brewster in his Land Of Midnight' thrail. Now he reappeared somewhat outside the adventure area with Throne Of Fire for Melbourne House. Though in fact he hadn't programmed it, Mike played an important part in the game and graphics design. Throne Of Fire – three brothers battled for the Ihrone of power with the player taking on the part of one of the brothers and the computer controlling the others – used a split-screen format similar to that of Spy ve Spy. It looked very good, but we felt it was a bit too easy to be really satisfying, although the game scored through an option for two players to take on a brother each while the computer played the remaining brother.

JUNE

TALK OF THE DEVIL, having just mentioned it, in June Spy vs Spy if popped up. Beyond's prequel had been a Smash some years before. The follow up, titled Island Capper and released through Databyte, saw the familiar black spy and white spy running around a tropical island searching for parts of a missile, using the Trapulator to lay devious traps as the means to exterminate each other. Oddly, the monochromatic presentation of the earliar game was dropped in favour of colour – too much in fact, and ugly attribute problems gave it a rather garish appearance. This wasn't really progress, with slow, jarky scrotling letting down a reasonably playable game, and reducing it to only 53%

You didn't have to be on a tropical island to enjoy the heat—this a was sunny June for a change, and there were 37 games in review! Could this really be summer? I can remember past Junes when we were lucky to scrape 15 games together. Mind you, a lot of the titles were budgets. No, we lacked not for games, but the Smashes were

tew.
Luckily Hydrolool from FTL the Gargoyle Games label, gave us something to rave about – and kept us cool, for the sequel to the acclaimed Sweevo's World had Sweevo on a new mission this time under water, cleaning out the fifthy



A somewhat bewildered looking Sweeve encounters the over-friendly delphin.

world known as Deathbowl. The famous Gargoyle sense of humour clearly emerged in Sweevo's task, pulling out each of the four plugs that held the water in, as assorted nasties tried anything to get rid of him. Sturning 3-D isometric graphics set en several levels, amusing animatien and devious puzzles mede it a hit, but Hydrafool was very derivative of Sweevo's World, and more likely to appeal, it was fett, to fans of the previous game.

in quick succession **Ultimate** slipped out another release in a marble vein of madness – *Bubbler*. It was an improvement on *Martianolas*, though not by sufficiently large a margin to improve their flavour to full. The planet Irkon, under the sway of the evil wizard Vadra, could be saved by corking magical bottles that controlled his power. Once again Ultimate chose to use monochromatic 3-D graphics with smooth screen scrolling, inertial effects coupled with the awkward control method made movement along the walk-ways difficult Presentation may have been fine but gameplay was lacking, and mixed feelings amongst the reviewers, led to an overall rating of 78%.

Not one to be outdone, June saw Derek Brewster following the Playing Tips supplement with his very own Adventure extravaganza. Rainbird finally released a Spectrum version of The Pawn, an acclaimed Atan ST bit. Sadly it came minus the pretty graphics but still enjoyed Derek's approval at 90%.

Melbourne House managed to top this, however, with Shadows Of Mordor, follow up to The Lord Of The Rings. Following the further adventures of Frodo and Sam in The Two Towers, it left the player to choose which character to play. Shadows Of Mordor retained the use of Inglish (the vocabulary system which made The Hobbit such a big hit), but only 128% Spectrums had enough memory for the vocabulary and the such as the such as

Shadows Of Mordor retained the use of Inglish (the vocabulary system which made The Hobbit such a big hit), but only 129K Spectrums had enough memory for the graphics to be displayed.

Durell were also in full sequel mode and obasing another Smash with Saboteur II (or should it have been called Sister Of Saboteur?). With the hero of Saboteur dead, it was his sister who took up the

central role in a bid to stop the Dictator from using his hi-tech missile systems, white androld warriors were out to stop the avenging angeline. There were improvements, but in style of play and graphical presentation it followed the first garne very closely. These similarities resulted in a rating of 83%. Had a little more originality been used it might have made it to Smash status.

Elsewhere the software front was dismal. Ocean's Army Moves looked good but odd cellision detection made it frustrating, Hewson slipped up with Guntunner, a scrolling shoot-'emup with a stale format, Quicksilwa's wire-frame Red Scorpion was a poor Battlezone rehash that left everyone wondering whether the oncegreat software label would ever find a game of merit again. Even quirky Piranha disappointed with Mr Weems, while Mario Bros from Ocean was hardly the coin-op/games console conversion we ware hoping for, and most fuctiorous licence (probably) of the year to date came from Activision in the quacky shape of Howard The Duck – and it was out for a duck as well.

At the very last moment Barbarian dashed to the rescue. Palace Software not only caused controversy with their adverts, but the review of the game dich't go down too well in some quarters. Simple enough in theme, it was a savage beat-tem-up with swords in a gladiatorial arena, but the first-rate practice mode and two-player option (on the cassette's B-side) together with fine monochromatic animation, made Barbarian one of the best fight games to emerge for a long while. Not quite a Smash, but very nearly.

JULY

NOW the 'summer slump' really started – it seems to get later every year – and not only did the number of games decrease but there was also a distinct lack of quality software, only Zynaps and Killed Until Dead saved the day.

Becovering from the uninestings.

Recovering from the uninspling Gunrumner, Hewson's next shoot-

em-up (an old-fashioned genre which had hardly ever been in their repertoire) saw a change of pace, deas and presentation. Zynaps was a classy, high-speed, horizontally scrolling game, just about the ultimate in Nemesis clones in tact. Additional weaponry could be collected, improving your chances against the aliens but, basically you were on your own. With code by Dominic Robinson and snazzy graphics by Steve Crow looking like colourful, smooth-moving works of art, this shoot-'em-up was a joy to play. Zynaps served to relieve the boredom of a software-starved month.

The big surprise, however, was Killed Until Dead — a surprise because although the reviewing began early enough, no-one noticed how much this quiet game affected everyone else... more of that below.

more of that below.

Before the month descended entirely into a slough of despond, we had Stormbringer on M.A.D., letest in the long line of Mastertronic's 'Magic Knight' games. Having returned from Knight Tyme the bero had split into two personalities; one good and the other decidedly off colour. In merging the two egos your estored White Knight to his former glory. Programmed as usual by David Jones, it followed the same format Programmed as usual by David Jones, it followed the same format of the previous 'Magic Knight' games in collecting objects and grouping them together to solve the numerous problems. And although it lived up to expectations already set with colourful, detailed graphics and devious puzzles, we were split over it; two reviewers reckoned it. over it; two reviewers reckoned it an excellent buy at £2.99, the other pointed out that it added little to the well-worn formula. The result averaged out at 86%.

And then there was Thing Bounces Back - a sequel without a Spectrum predecessor. Gremlin Graphics's Thing On A Spring had been a big CBM 64 hit with its uniquely cute boinging character in battle against wicked toys in the eyll Goblin's toy factory. In the unprecedented sequel Thing attempted to stop the flow of svil playthings by collecting components of a computer. The toy factory was an industrial complex of platforms and pipes which provided a game on par with the Monty Mole series, but disappointing documentation and awkward controls let it down considerably.

In the same month Gremlin released, at the slightly lower price of £4.99, Alien Evolution, A 3-D scrolling game with more than a scrolling game with more than a passing resemblance to the ancient hit Art Attack (reviewed in Issue One), it had the player ridding the planet's surface of invading aliens. Though very derivative, it remained playable and reasonably addictive, but the passage of time elapsed since Ant Attack lowered its rating to 75%. The MicroProse association with American Origin Systems, noted for their accurate attack-flight simulations and software personality boss, ace fighter pilot Wild Bill Stealey, finally resulted in the Spectrum release of F-15 Strike Eagle, Flight sims rarely look their best on the Spectrum, but



Where it all starts, seated at the desk, tape recorder on pouse, telephone poised and notopad at the ready. Sleuths have never had it so comfortable!



this one contained as many thrills and spills as could be reasonably expected, and scored a very high

As for the rest - well July is probably better forgotten except

Killed Until Dead. So there we were, sitting at the back end of the schedule, putting the last of the reviews together, when suddenly Paul Sumner noted that he'd given it 64%. Pages Kash looked at the it 93%. Roger Kean looked at the other comments already in and let fly with a gasp! A Smash had crept up on usl **US Gold's** detective game was set firmly in favourite sleuthing land, a closed

environment with only fellow amateur sleuths as the victims, murderers and hunters. At the Gargoyle Hotel all the world's mystery writers had assembled for a réunion but one is a murderer and another the intended victim. Your task was to solve the mystery before the event could actually take place. Killed Until Dead was an enjoyable and involving mixture of intrigue and action in a race against time, topped off by atmospheric graphics and compelling gameplay - it illuminated gloomy July.

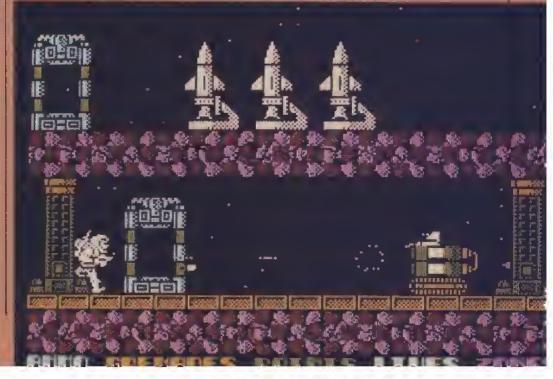
AUGUST

NOT CONTENT with resting on their recently regained laurels, Hewson followed up July's Smash with yet another all-blasting shoot-'em-up called Exolon, The theme was hardly new mercenary is hired to nd a world of numerous beastles and unfriendly military installations using a powerful laser system and grenades for the more stubborn obstacles. But Exolor's main assets fay in its very large, brightly coloured and highly detailed graphics and the smooth animation of its central character. And the gameplay was all you would expect from a lavishly presented piece of action software. The 125 screens also showed that there was more to Exolor than just pretty graphics. mercenary is hired to nd a world

showed that there was more to Exolor than just pretty graphics. It has always seemed strange to me that no-one had picked up Flesh Gorden to turn him from celluloid hero to a pixellated one, but M.A.D. finally did it and obliged with the game. Sadly the result aped some of those leatures which are postellatedly reparded. which are nostalgleally regarded today with fondness in the films but which don't look so endearing in a computer game - such as a poor plot and dreadful effects. Divided into three sub-games, Flash dashed through jungles, beat up cave dwellers and showed off his progress as a materialic. beat up cave dwellers and showed off his prowess as a motorbike rider. The graphics were quite dreadful, and as one reviewer remarked, Flash looked somewhat like a deep-sea diver. A disappointing game that held few surprises in store for the player. After many rumoured launches and subsequent delays, Ocean scored a Smash with the 126K version of a game based on James Clavell's best-selling novel Tal-Pan, Central to the plot was trader Dirk Struan who wanted little out

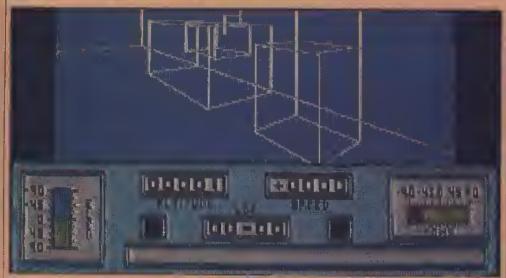
Dirk Struan who wanted little out of life other than a vast fortune and to be boss of a trading empire—its Tai-Pan. It was, not unsurprisingly, a trading game where you started with a £300,000 loan to be paid

Vitore The Besulted battles through screen after screen of highly colourful and explosive action





Cutting a swath through galactic history in Mercenary



back within three months. Trading games have a long and sometimes respectable Spectrum history, but they're usually let down by repetition. Tai-Pan's action couldn't be described as high speed but the wealth of things to undertake, such as purchasing and crewing ships, risk taking and avoiding the depredations of pirates on the high seas, made it one of the most enjoyable games of the month.

28

14.99

4,99

7.99

.99

Derek's adventure Smash for the month marked a return to form of Macmillan's software arm Piranha. The Big Sleaze was written by Fergus McNeitl and it was a different approach for the writer renowned for his hiterious parodies of better known works such as The Lord Of The Rings (Bored Of The Rings), Cast as film noir private detective Sam Spillade you had to solve various cases that fell into your tawdry office. As with Fergus' earlier hits

It was the will and humour perforating the text that made Derek give *The Big Sleaze* 93%. Veteran 3-D Smashers

Veteran 3-D Smashers Realtime Software released Starfox, their second game of the year, this time marketed by Ariolasoft offshoot Reaktor. Piloting the mighty craft Starfox, the player had to save the universe yet again from marauding aliens. It had many of the good points that made Code Name Mat and Eitle such classics, and it deviated slightly from Realtime's shoot-'ern-up format. Planets had to be located, mother ships docked with, enemies destroyed and numerous other tasks had to be carried out. A combination of filled-in graphics and vectors were used to represent the enemy ships. While both Mike and Robin thought it highly impressive, Ben was not so convinced. He labelled it 'unplayable' and brought the overall rating down to 77%.

US Gold's Road Runner, a conversion from the arcade game which was, in turn, based on the cartoon, failed to convince everyone. The game design wasn't entirely satisfactory – Road Runner hurtled along roads collecting seed chased by the infamous Wile E Coyote, while trucks, crevasses, boulders and exploding mines all barred his path to long life. Through a multiload system, US Gold tried to capture the cartoon's atmosphere with garish multicoloured graphics, but this led to the dreaded attribute problem rearing its ugly head once again, and logether with complaints about the awkward character control, led to an overall rating of 73%.

The other big licence was Domark's second attempt at a James Bond film, The Living Daylights. It was divided into several levels following the main action scenes from the film. In the game this took the form of several similar scrolling sectors where you killed baddies. The only thing that seemed to change were the sector backgrounds, giving an all round sense of disappointment. Poor onscreen presentation and stack gameptanning let down what was

screen presentation and stack gameptanning let down what was potentially a fine game.

As a refreshing change from coin-op conversions and tie-ins, Pete Cooke released his second hit of the year. Micronaut One represented two changes in direction for Pete, he had moved from CRL to Nexus, and after two Tau Ceti games, abandoned the formula to do a very fast wireframe 3-D tunnel game. At that, it might have been quite ordinary, but the underground natwork of tunnels were infested by an insect form with three distinct biological stages to their lives which added interest to the game. And of course there was the by now accepted intricacles of Pete's front end with multiple options, plus a racing game to improve the player's steering abilities. Rated at 92%, it reaffirmed Pete Cooke's position as a top programmer.

A pity as much couldn't be said for most other programs reviewed in the issue. Ariolasoft's licensed Challenge Of The Gobots palled very quickly, Ocean's attractive looking Mutants turned out to be unaddictive, Reaktir had three disappointer sisters in Killer Ring, Deadringer and Mountle Mick's Deathride (such an obsession with death!), the much-heraided Leviathan from English Software flapped and then flopped, Championship Baseball made Activision look dull and even Martech slowed up with the interesting but sluggish Catch 23. At least Virgin Games stuck firmly with their collective longue in cheek and amused us with (was it a floence?) Trans-Atlantic Balloon Challenge. The game couldn't possibly detract from adventurer-boss Richard Branson's brave exploit, because it was really too silly to be taken very seriously, and we couldn't resist giving it the very first (and probably last) CRASH

SEPTEMBER

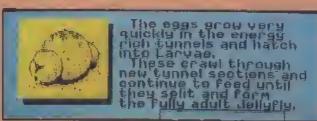
tF CRASH had a Game Of The Month award it would undoubtedly have gone to Novagen's Mercenary. Almost two years in the making, Mercenary must be the longest-awaited conversion ever. And the Spectrum coding by David Aubrey-Jones resulted in Mercenary's fastest Incarnation—a triumph for both programmer and machine. The player has crash-landed on the inhospitable planet Targ, and the essence of the game is to seek a craft to escape from Targ's gravitational well. It's to your benefit that war has raged on Targ between the Mechanoids and the Palyars for years, because to gain enough credits to buy a super ship you can be a freelance fighter for either alde.

Novagen used vector graphics to represent structures above and below the planet's surface. And while the game featured exceptionally fast, smoothmoving graphics, it also mixed in puzzle-solving to give a sense of depth. The reviewers were united in their opinion of Mercenary, giving it an Overall rating of 96%.

Virgin Games's uneven record improved a touch with Rebal.

Virgin Games's uneven record improved a touch with Rebel, another in the long line of bird's-eye-view scrolling games that characterised 1987. The graphics were attractively detailed, but Rebel split reviewers over the value of its content – Paul thought it hard, Ben unoriginal, It got 76%, US Gold's attractive but strange-looking Survivor also split the reviewers, coming in at 70% Overall.

On the budget side, there was little to recommend though quite a lot of it, few of the games achieving more than 45% (the same could be said of the full-price games, to be fair). Players made a fine exception with Joe Blade, but even that caused controversy, Mike and Paul loved the game (90%) while Mark thought it only above-average at 85%. After a few nasty scenes involving a nerf balf and a Biro our exafted editor Roger kean intervened with a cry of 'enerf's enerf' (I've been waiting to pull that joke for months) and an Overall rating of 84% was agreed. Playing the part of Joe Blade you explored the evil Crax



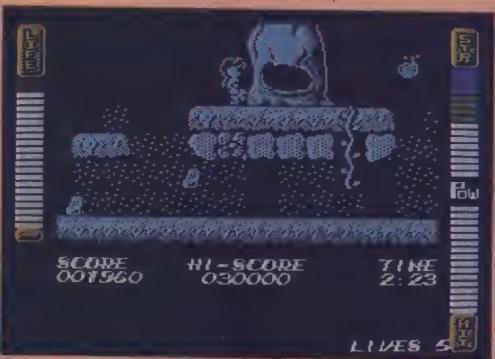
Flight is fast, death swift in Pete Cooke's Micronaut One



Bloodfinger's stronghold to rescue six world leaders, armed with disguises and a trusty machine gun, The cartoonesque but monochromatic graphics enhanced play, and it was agreed that Joe Blade had playability in

second with Stifflip & Co - but it was, of course, a terrible error that apparently occurred in layout, and tortunately fooled no-one, for the game belonged to Palacs. And a fine oddity it was too, featuring Viscount Stifflip and some friends

ncluding Mike Woodroffe (Gremlins) and Teoman Irmak (graphics for Touchstones Of Aniannon), it played much like Adventuresoft releases and Derek rated it at 84%



I'm no soppy girlie, I'm Athena

abundance with enough thought required to keep the player returning to it time after time

Odin had developed an ultrafast horizontal-scrolling routine which at one point they hoped might be at one point they noped might be used by Thalamus for a Spectrum conversion of Stavros Fasculas's Commodore 54 hit Delta. In the event nothing happened on that front, but shortly afterwards Fire-bird put out Odin's Sidewize, which did bear more than a passing commission. ing resemblance to Detta. Other magazines rated it quite highty, but it found less favour with CRASH at only 50% because the attack waves were all the same and predictable. And with Quicksilva going down the tubes, Imagine stiding disappointingly out with Game Over and even Piranha failing to impress much with Don Priestlay's Flunky, it was left to Ocean, Palace and Elite to score top arcade marks along with Novagen.

Continuing the spate of beat/ maim/kick-'em-up-type games, Ocean served up Renegade, Ocean served up Renegade, much to the gratification of certain bloodthirsty reviewers. Here was one of the very best street-fighting games of all, where you had to cross five landscapes to reach your lady love Lucy; the basic theme of each was to defeat muggers before they stretched you out. The graphics were detailed, marred only by the odd attribute problem. And there was certainly plenty of action, though perhaps home-computer entertainment needs a little more variation than cames in the arcades

In CRASH it looked like Novagen, not content with just one Smash in a month, had scored a

in an attempt to scupper Count Chameleon's dastardly plans for that last bastion of British hope and glory, the beloved cricket ball. By manipulating icons, you could control all four members of your team. Windowing techniques just like those in The Fourth Protocol showed the action, which prog-rammers Binary Design had helped create. The presentation heiped create. The presentation was polished and garnished with humour; plenty of puzzles and a second game on the cassette's B-side contributed to a great prod-

Elite's contribution was Batty. Through the year there'd been a resurgence of the old Breakouttype games; we'd had Arkanold from Imagine and Krakout from Gremlin Graphics, but Batty was the main selling point of Elite's 6-Pak Vol. 2 rather than a solus game, and is best described as an improved version of Arkanoid. Elite pushed the Breakout theme about as far as it could go, with beautiful presentation and simple beautiful presentation and simple but compelling gameplay. Batty want to show that good ideas nevertade, they just get rewritten.

Derek's Smash of the month was a budget game from The Power House. Custerds Quest, a humanous advanture about the

humorous adventure about the antics of Sir Coward de Custerd, antics of Sir Coward de Custerd, may have been a cheapie but programmer Craig Davies secrificed nothing and provided a first-rate game. Derek was also pleased with Masters Of The Universe from US Gold, who successfully made amends for earlier releasing the abominable arcadis version of the same game. arcade version of the same game, also based on the TV series. Programmed by a large group

OCTOBER

month's THE month's most obvious feature was The CRASH Sampler precariously taped to the front cover, with demos such as the graphically breathtaking Driller-from Incentive and GOU's Trentor The Last Stormtrooper.
 Christmas and The PCW Show loomed large, so many software houses were holding back on their latest products. Nevertheless the October issue contained its fair

Software Projects had been noticeably absent since Dragon's Lair II but Hysteria marked their return. Reminiscent of Ocean's Cobra, it failed to live up to the high standards set by the hit game despite well-defined, colourful алф reasonably comculsive gameplay. We felt Hysteria offered little long-term challenge. Perhaps the appeal of the beat-up-the-baddles genre was waning ... Ocean had two high-class

Ocean had two high-class games, Athena and Wizball. The industry watchwords were 'computer nasty' and 'sexism'. In September CRASH had reviewed Soft And Cuddly from The Power House, which unfortunately coincided with the Hungerford massacre and thus became associated with psychopathic violence, while for Game Over Imagine had pushed women about as far forward on packaging as the marketing men dared decently go, and the portrayal of women in derisory passive roles was being watched closely.

But Athena reversed the traditional stereotyped roles of men and women, with the Goddess Of Wisdom herself wielding destructive weapons in a bid to clear six levels of nastles, Unhindered by stiletto heels and traditional streets and traditional streets. running mascara, Athena could do anything the typical male hero

For all that, in SNK's arcade game Athena is more Bambi than Rambo, and on the Spectrum screen she was more cute than screen she was more cure that killer; Ocean also undid their sexual-equality programme by portraying her on the packaging in the properties of the packaging in the properties of the packaging in the packaging i male droolerama style. The gameplay closely resembled that of *Ghosts 'N Goblins –* Ben thought it unpleyable but Ricky and Nick rated it an excellent

conversion.

Wizball, on the other hand, was a different cauldron of frogs, for once uniting all the reviewers. For a start, its scenario was involving: Zark and his unpleasant horde had invaded Wizworld and bleached the once-colourful land, so the local wizard set out at once to paint the town red and annihilate the colour-blind swarm. A big hit on the Commodore 64 Sensible Software, it translated faithfully to translated trainfully to the Spectrum. The graphics were very good, with lots of attention paid to detail such as the magnificent Mount Rushmore. And even the odd colour clash didn't stop it being Smashed.

The other two Smashes of the month were for the Firebird labels, one Gold and one Silver. I. Ball. 2 (Firebird Silver) was the follow-up to the equally Smashed I, Ball. Unusually for a follow-up, I, Ball. 2 was not derivative of its predecessor. It was a neatlypresented game but the real crux

presented game out the real chix was its instant playability.

Bubble Bobble gave Firebird their Golden Smash. Though retailing at a higher price, the pretty coin-op conversion wasn't a complex game (just expensive in the pretty coin-op conversion wasn't a complex game (just expensive in the pretty coin-op conversion wasn't accomplex game (just expensive in the pretty coin-op coincide). licence fees, no doubt). The conversion was competently carried out, and helpfully the coincop graphics were already suitable for smaller home computers. Simple it may have been, but all the original's addictive qualities

were retained.

Plexar was Plexar was good too. The M.A.D. game had distinct echoes of Gremlin's Trailblazer - you controlled a ball bouncing along treacherous crystal roads. The playing area featured highly detailed monochromatic graphics. and the lack of colour in the playing area was cleverly disguised by colourful backgrounds. Again, it was a very simple idea but proved frustrating in the right way enough to keep you coming back

As the year wore on, we were seeing more and more budget games, and they were better than ever before, **Hewson**, presumably reckoning that if you can't beat 'em-up, join up, launched their budget label Rack-It with Draughts Genius and Ocean Conqueror, and both performed reasonably well. Draughts Genius was a good implementation of the ancient game, but apart from offering a one-player-versus-computer option it didn't have much advantage over an ordinary diaughts set. Ocean Conqueror got 77% for being an accurate submarine warfare simulation with

3-D periscope graphics and plenty to do once you'd got started.

TV cartoen series continued to spawn Spectrum tie-ins with Gremlin Graphics's release of MASK (constitution). MASK I (possibly the first game to add the numerical suffix - they ware already working on MASK II). Playing hero Matt Trakker you had to enter a time vortex and rescue your fellow MASK agents from the clutches of the VENOM organisation, it was a bird's-eye-

ugansation. It was a bito s-eye-view, multidirectionally-scrolling shoot-em-up-cum-puzzle-solving game played across four different backdrops. Though small and monochromatic, the graphics were well-defined, and the gameplay was enjoyable enough, but the story line bore little resemblance to the TV series.

NOVEMBER

so bad, perhaps a bit on the low side for the time of year, but what was disappointing was that few of them really grabbed the attention, only four getting over 75%. The one Smash went straight,

and without argument, to Elite for Thundercats - yet another tie-in with a TV cartoon series. But the with a five autom series, but the accolate really went to Gargoyle Games, who wrote the game, firmly underlining their 1987 status as developers rather than as a house involved marketing and distribution. Thundercats was a frantically fast, horizontally scrolling slash-temp that made you want to get on to the next screen just to see what happened there—the prime quality. distribution. of addictiveness. And if Lion-O rather resembled Gargoyle's older Celtic hero Cuchulainn, who cared? It was nice to see him back

Another carteon flopped miserably for us; and that was Virgin Games's Action Force by the ubiquitous Gang Of Five. its neat concept was wrecked on the rocks of poor scrolling, unfair gemeplay and mind-numbingly absent game. One suspected it had been rushed like mad into production without much playtesting.

Just missing the top by a few per cent, Gremlin Graphics's rerun Jack The Nipper II in Coconut Capers proved again that the adage 'if you have a good formula then do it several times that the adage. over makes financial senso. The reviewers all agreed in their comments that this was a good sequel, with perhaps fewer puzzles to solve but more to see Paul's only grudge was that the Nipper wasn't as naughty as strange, coming from

an aspiring policeman.

From mid-1987 onward, Code
Masters had been pushing like m.a.d. to make themselves the top budget house, with massive coverage in both computer and coverage in both computer and general media (including several national papers), much of it concentrating on the two youthful whiz-kid owners, David Darling and Richard Darling. By



With Freescape, you can see the stark 3-D scenes of Driller from any angle

November there was a touch of hysteria in the publicity machine's hype for the company's products and the young celebrities. and the young characterised in and the young calebrities, characterised in so many headlines and captions as 'The Darlings Of The Industry', in fact they had produced some very good budget titles, but everyone happily overlooked the fact that they also produced some terrible

at recreating a difficult sport. Nick gave It 87%, but Robin Gendy, who had developed an expensive taste for the sport and regarded payment for his CRASH writing as a slush fund looking for hard snow, gave it 71%. Dizzy, written by the Oliver Twins (made almost as adorable by the media as their bosses. The Darlings), was a playable arcade adventure of sorts, but to a raucous bunch like the CRASH reviewers its cutesy appearance was something of a

US Gold, as themselves and as their new label GOI, disappointed, especially with the latter's *Trantor* The Last Stormtrooper. Who could forget the graphics? They were tremendously exciting and it looked so atmospheric, but what happened to the game? Through Its slick, glossy appearance Trantor received 68% from a

grieving reviewing team,
And Indiana Jones And The
Temple Of Doom and gloom fared
a little worse. Ironically, Spectrumowners enjoyed the best version of all (apart from the Atarl ST's) because the inevitable monochrome graphics lent clarity to an otherwise muddled and confusing series of screens. Gameplay was poor too: three screens wasn't enough and they were too easy in one sense, being made hard only by frustrating factors such as pop-up thugs that killed you on the edge of the

Electric Dream also came a crooper with what should have been a great game, Supersprint, converted from the Atari doin-op. A few values carried over from the original earned it 58%, but the Spectrum implementation added

Even Darek, despité a dreadful dose of 3-Dred-and-greenness he picked up on holiday, only managed a minor fit of enthusiasm with two adventures, one of which was a GAC-ed Incentive release, Karyssia Queen Of Diamonds; the other, a budget double bill from

other, a budget double bill from Tartan consisting of The Prospector and The Crown Of Ramhotep, was Quilled.

All in all, apart from some bright spots later in the month, it was a gloomy few weeks for software that left the Spectrum addicts feeling a bit like Indy – plunged in that temple of doom.

DECEMBER

FOR THE LAST month of the year, things picked up to give us two Smashes of great merit. First and foremost, 18 months of hard work pald off for Incentive's new solid 3-D technique Freescape, and Driller – the first game to use the routness – proved to be among the all-lime top-rated Smashes with 97%.

97%.
Flight simulations have always been a difficult area, and CRASH often accused of not understanding them enough to be able to review them sensibly. It's an unworthy accusation, though it's true they tend to have a limited appeal; not so Gunship, which received 92% and so earned MicroProse a Smash as one of the best-ever helicopter simulations.

And there were five other highlyrated and entertaining games. US Gold skated back on boards with the novel 720°, Digital Integration gave us the very dangerous ice-sport simulation Bobsielgh, thrilling high-speed 3-D, Hewson showed with the unique rotating game Nebulus that the sudden loss to Telecomsoft of their longterm program-developers Graftgold (a team which includes Steve Turner and Andrew Braybrook) couldn't deter them, and Mastertronic finally provided Washing finally provided U.C.M. on the M.A.B. label.

Wrapping up last year's Look-back, I noted that at the very last Code Masters 'entered the budget areria with a pile of titles, which received a warm reception ... And despite the occasional bug-ridden cheape, it certainly has been the year when budget titles came of age, though

budget titles came of age, though often enough along the lines of 'might is right, or never mind the quality fill the length of shelf'.

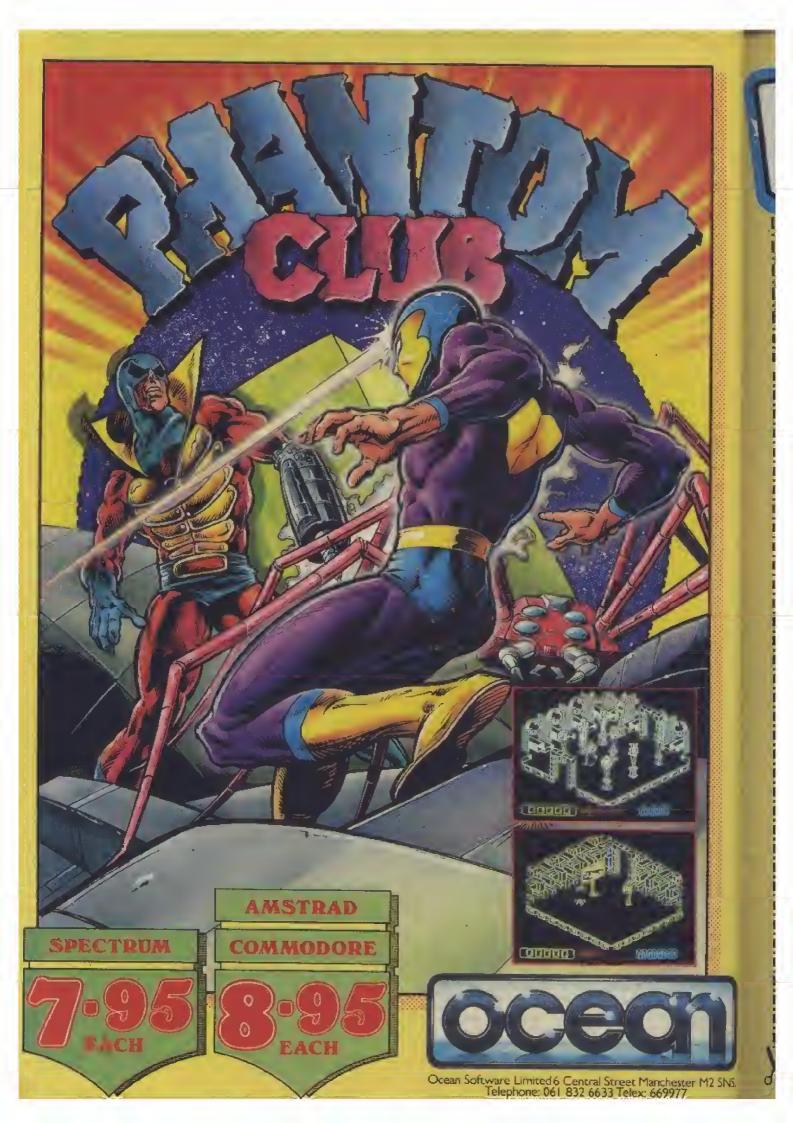
The lear of full-price software houses such as Ocean – that a danger of budget games is their price relative to the shelf space they occupy – is still real.

One shelf-loot of full-price Ocean games earns the shop-keeper some five times what the same feet of budget games would. But if a shopkeeper has a few leat of budget games in there with his full-pricers, that drags down what full-pricers, that drags down what he sees as the per-foot profitability of his whole computer-games section. Will be (or his counterpart, the executive at a high-street chain) decide it no longer makes economic sense to sell computer games AT ALL?

And then I still contend that the ck of advertisements from lack of advertisements from budget houses (which they simply can't afford out of the low profit they make on each game) does far more damage than merely denting magazines' revenues — it actually creates a lower level of awareness about computer games, and with a lower thrill factor, fewer people are interested and the whole mar-ket becomes decreased.

ket becomes depressed. On the other hand, the growing of the other hand, the growing strength of the 16-bit market is forcing 8-bit software to grow up as well, and one thing you can say of 1987 – some three years after it was firmly declared that the humble Spectrum had gone as far as it could – is that the barners of what is possible have been pushed outward yet again, in many different ways but always to our benefit as games-players.

Already, I can see 1988 will be another interesting year . . .





READERS' AWA

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BEST GRAPHICS

BEST SOFTWARE HOUSE

BEST UTILITY

BEST PERIPHERAL

BEST PBM GAME

MOST EFFECTIVE GAME ADVERTISEMENT

BEST GAME PACKAGING (box, instructions etc)

BEST GAME INLAY ART

WORST GAME

MOST OVERHYPED GAME

EASIEST GAME

MOST CHALLENGING GAME

MOST ACCURATE CRASH REVIEW

LEAST ACCURATE CRASH REVIEW

Each year, the CRASH Readers' Awards are your chance to look back at the best, the brightest and some of the others - and, through your votes, tell the software industry what you think.

The results of this year's CRASH Readers' Awards will be published in issue 50, so please get your entry in by January 23 we'll need time to process the thousands of votes expected!

As last year, there'll be £20 worth of software and a CRASH T-shirt (chosen from those advertised on page 166 of this issue) for the first ten forms picked out of an old school prize cup on January 23.

Vote in as many categories as you can, and in the categories where you vote for a particular game, please remember that the game must have been reviewed in CRASH in Issues 36-48 inclusive to qualify. (The review date can be checked in the CRASH Directory, which starts on page 95.)

CALL IT A SEQUEL... AND YOU'LL LAND UP FLAT ON YOUR BACK.









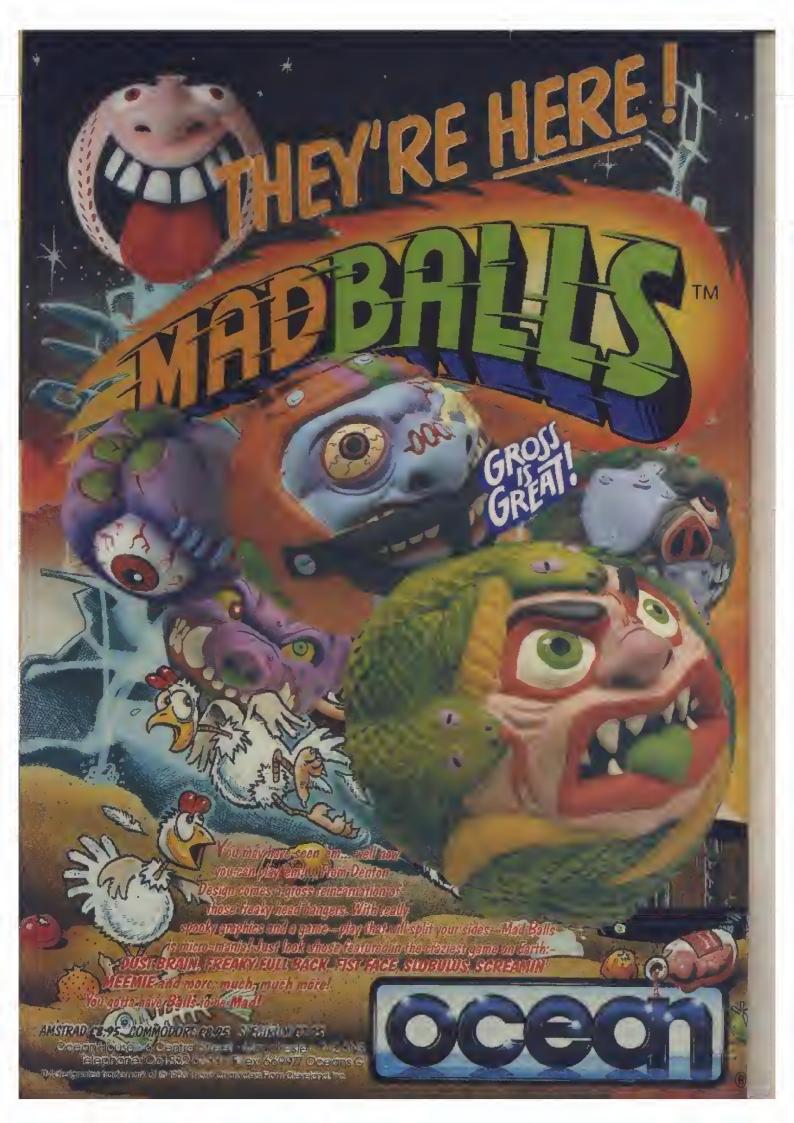
They called International Karate the best beat-em-up so far. And who are we to argue?
But Archer Maclean has come up with a stunner: A Third Fighter.
Amazing animated background. New moves. Re-mixed music.
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Producer: Martech Retail price: £8.99 Author: Creative Reality

Staine, the psychopathic nice guy, is out with his faithful friend Ukko to lop a few heads from evil bodies in this licence based on the character from the comic 2000AD. But the first striking feature of Staine isn't the violent, pseudoancient saga it's the control system REFLEX, developed by Creative Reality over six months and first used

DAVE

"To the nonplaying observer, Slaine looks dult but the thoroughly mindless fighting is enjoyable to play! The graphics, are good, albeit unimportant, and though the scrolling of the instructions is annoying at first at least it keeps you on first at least it keeps you on vour toes

The rough 'n' tough boy's actions, which are reported by onscreen text rather than shown in graphics, are determined choosing from options in a 'mind frame' on the left side of the screen. Within this window a freely-moving severed hand is used as a selection cursor, selecting an action from Sláine's thoughts as they scroll across.

Martech hopes this REFLEX after system. conceived dissatisfaction with the almosphere of the company's Nemesis The Warlock 2000AD licence (61% in Issue 40), has produced an interactive story that really captures the spirit of the comic character as Slaine and his companion move through their monstrous world.

MIKE

"Slaine is probably the best adventure the played. Detailed graphics and the REFLEX system keep it more interesting than the usual adventure, "

73%

When they enter a new area, Staine can look around, examining his fresh surroundings as a short description of the environment is given onscreen. (Before moving to some locations, though, Slaine has to perform specific actions.)

As they progress through the



Can a fight be a fight without blood on the screen?

hand combat begins, options flow thick and fast through the mind screen – so very quick responses are necessary in this adventure. If you can get the cursor there accurately and in time, Sláine cen throw a punch or aim a kick, and – if he carries one - swing an axe or throw it to cause horrific damage, (This, however, leaves Slaine unarmed and he must call Ukko to retrieve the weapon.) But while you waste time dithering and choosing. Staline just keeps getting hit

What Slaine can do is ultimately determined by his warp rating, a measure of his strength and power. In combat this can be reduced if opponents are too strong, but a successful fight, a period of rest, or the eating of food can push Slaine's rating to higher

But if the warp rating reaches its maximum, the barbarian goes berserk, slaughtering all enemies that he encounters.

in a more cerebral vein, the muscular menace can manipulate objects that he finds on his travels, picking them up, dropping them, putting one inside the other, or using one upon another (inserting

a key into a chest, for instance). For all that, nothing but quick wits will get Slaine through his day intact.

Staine's thoughts scroll through the 'mind frame' (left of screen) — and when the fight hots up, you'll have to quickly make a choice



BEN

land of Lyonesse (the country of Arthurian myth, supposedly submerged off Cornwall), the pair encounter evil in its purest form—the Drune Lords (thrir powers are back, that feats are table, the land is theirs, the later table us).

inlay tells us).
And when the fierce hand-to-

"Slaine is the best 2000AD licence yet, but I am (again) unimpressed. Why oh why did Martech use REFLEX for such a brilliant subject? Perhaps the programmers thought, Slaine would eppeal to more people in a kind of limbo between adventure and arcade – but the control system fells between two stools. It makes a simple task, like going north or picking up an object, difficult and overcomplicated, and it would be more satisfying (and far quicker) to either type in an instruction or press a key.

So Slaine hasn't got the sophisticated command vocabulary of a good adventure; and it doesn't work as an arcade game either, because the fight sequences are boring and unimaginative without onscreen action. You're left with a flat, unatmospheric reflex test.

There are good things in Slaine too – the illustrative graphics are brilliant, and if you can ignore the input system you'll have fun. But it should have been so much better . . . "

COMMENTS

Joysticks: Cursor, Kempston,

Graphics: distinctive icons and attractive side panels create a strong atmosphere Sound: spot effects Options: definable keys General rating: an enjoyable cross between adventure and reality

Presentation Graphics Playability Addictive qualities

Commodore 64/128 Price £8.95

COMMODORE USERS' Review October Issue

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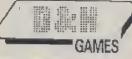
"YOUR SINCLAIR"

Review November Issue

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Screen Scene

destructive scenario you either

weapon systems, vital to progress. Points are awarded for moving into new areas via a force field and for blasting out other

ionisers have been destabilised by your eponymous anarchist, you can enter the Meson Interruptor and destroy everything in sight -and that includes those four Omega Droids.

CRITICISM

 " At first I was quite happy with Nihilist, it's very

Producer: Electric Dreams Retail price: £9.95 Author: Shamid Ahmed

n a floating space platform dwells a race of droids. You are one of the low-life machines, ambitious to elevate your mechanical carcass to the high caste of the Omega Droids. Four of these almost invincible creatures already exist - but if you can become the fifth you can destroy them. (Why? Because you're nothing but a nihilist at heart!)

To become an Omega Droid you must destabilise seven ionisers by sucking them dry of their energy and using it for your own reserves. You can find clues (mostly suggesting you destroy everything in sight) in information terminals, and use teleports to transport yourself through the platform's superstructure and its system of air locks.

Movement in some areas is restricted by force fields, though these can be disabled with the

right pass.
Fellow droids slide across the platform, and in this extraordinarily

ram them or are rammed. There is a subtler, hands-off approach to weakening and destroying other droids: gather weapons from the several arsenals.
Once you're through a force field, you can acquire better

droids.
Once all the platform's seven

there's very little content to keep anyone interested for more than five minutes."

COMMENTS

Commodore 64 Paradroid, which can only be a credit. And it's really easy to get started in - but that

affects the addictivity. And indeed there's not much content to keep you going, despite the attractive presentation and graphics (which

are a bit bright for extended periods of play). "

 "Nihilist Is uncennity similar to the old Commodore 64 hit Paradroid, But though it's playable, it fails to create any atmosphere to capture the player's imagination, Paradroid

was a complex, highly addictive

arcade adventure; Nihilist is a poor imitation. The

monochromatic graphics have

ittle detail, the scrolling is jerky and this bland, unattractive game is almost immediately forgettable. "

 "I suppose someone had to have a go at Paradroid on the Spectrum eventually. The idea of Nihilist is very simple, but it's spoiled by an awkward control

method and eye-straining pixel-packed graphics. True, the smooth scrolling is quite an achievement considering the

amount of memory being moved around. But scrolling and automatic doors and extra

weapons don't make a game;

50%

MIKE

Joysticks: Cursor, Kempston,

Graphics: monochromatic; a bit too bright for comfort; but the scrolling is smooth (two reviewers felt!

Sound: the odd whine and beep General rating: unimpressive use of an old concept - an ambitious low-caste relative of the Commodore 64 Paradroid

Presentation Graphics 66% Playability 54% Addictive qualities **OVERALL** 49%

Nihilist nothing to it



STAR WARS

Producer: Domark Retail price: £9.95

Authors: Vektor Grafix, from an Atari coin-op

s the Force with you? It had better be if you're going to survive the waves of Empire tiefighters and their deadly missiles, and then take a plug at the massive Deathstar, And, megablockbuster as in Star Wars movie of 1977, the Deathstar must be destroyed if your rebel planet is

be destroyed if your reperplaneus not to be torn asunder.
You fly a small X-wing fighter. A force field surrounds it, giving protection against nine impacts from fireballs, and later collisions with laser towers and trench catwalks on the Deathstar's surface. But each strike reduces its shield strength.

its shield strength.

An onboard laser, aimed with the cursor, is your own defence, and can take out enemy fighters, laser towers, bunkers, trench turrets and approaching fireballs, amassing points through destruction.

If you can deal with all the dark Empire's fighters and their missiles, you have to aim for the the Deathstar itself. There your Xwing must be steered between a

MIKE

"The Spectrum Star Wars isn't quite as good as the coin-op - or, come to that, some of the other Star Warslike games such as Realtime's three-year-old Smash Starstrike, But it's not to be missed; the graphics are fast, though the lack of sound is a real loss, and the gameplay is excellent. The unfortunate thing is that it's too similar to Starstrike, "



Taking out an Empire tie-fighter

series of vertical laser towers, countering while fireballs.

And you're still not home and dry and Mark Hamill. Yet more fireballs fill your forward view, and again these must be promptly blasted: shield-ripping barriers can completely destroy your craft. Survive these terrors and you can unleash a photon torpedo into the Deathstar's exhaust port (how predictable that its one vulnerable spot is difficult to get at). If you miss, you can circumnavigate the Deathstar to fire a second shot.

Complete this mission, and there's another, harder game – just like the film, if it's worth seeing once it's worth seeing 64 times. And Domark elready has licences

for Atari's coin-ops of The Empire Strikes Back and Return Of The Jedi, the two cinema sequels to Star Wars - Spectrum versions are promised for 1988.

ROBIN

"Many a happy hour has been spent blasting away with the old arcade favourite when I should have been doing something more constructive. And Domark has reproduced the arcade game fairly faithfully for the Spectrum, right down to the character set. But the jerky graphics spoil it, and the ingame silence detracts from the atmosphere as well. True, it's very playable, but the cursor isn't self-centring - a major irritation - and there have been many shoot-'em-ups with more appeal and better presentation. Sadly, Domark's version of the once-great game offers too little too late. "

BYM

"So many pseudoStar Wars games are out now that the market must be close to saturation. Domark's official Star Wars conversion is an excellent copy of the arcade game and makes one or two graphical improvements on Starstrike – but if you've got the latter and not much cash, Star Wars may seem too similar to be worth buying."

> The Force is with you in the battle on the Deathstar



COMMENTS

Joysticks: Cursor, Kempston.

Graphics: simple and effective vector graphics Sound: lamous Star Wars tune

at beginning, but NO in-game sound

Options: definable keys, easy/ medium/hard levels
General rating: a longawaited official conversion
that's very playable but
improves little on Starstrike and others of the genre; still, two reviewers Smashed it

Graphics Playability Addictive qualities OVERALL



JACKAL

Producer: Konami Retail price: £7.95

Authors: David Whitehouse, Stephen Lockley and Adrian Carless, from a Konami coin-op

hose bounders have broken into our camp and caught us with our trousers down. Not only that, but they've also nabbed quite a few of our soldiers and are now holding them in a prisoner-ofwar camp. Our boys must be rescued and Bob, Grey, Quint and Decker are just the chaps for the

The four set off for enemy territory in a tank. At first, they encounter only soldiers, whom they can take out with their own machine guns or by running them over. But the soldiers can shoot back too.

Soon your four good guys meet up with mightler opposition. Large gun emplacements work in unison, making it increasingly difficult to avoid fire from one gun without being hit by a second, Even this artitlery can be taken out by the tank's weaponry, but only if you're prepared to take a chance your range is limited.

On arriving at the enemy camp, the courageous quartet can blast

their way through the outer gates and proceed to search for the

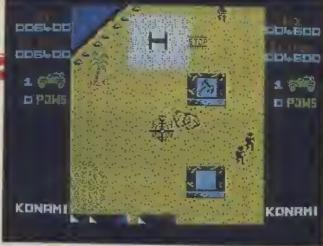
prisoners, who are held in huts. Other huts contain ex Other huts contain extra ammunition and weaponry, so the rescue team can build up a very vicious arsenal. But even with more and nastier weapons, it's a tough job - if you lose a life all the freed prisoners are imprisoned

After blasting down the walls of the prison huts and liberating the captured men, take them to helicopter pick-up points where they can escape.

And if you can manage the impossible, the fearless four can go on to attack the enemy headquarters. It's certainly a man's life in the army.

CRITICISM

 " Every time a plan-view game appears, I live in hope. But once appears, I live in hope. But once again it's a disappointment - the



Jackal: hide

frantic liggerings of Jackal's graphics really spoil it, the alternation of plan and side views of the tank is unrealistic, and the game itself is abysmal. The short game isser is abysinal, the short range of your missiles means there's a very high risk of being shot in close encounters, so the game ends up brief and not very playable.

 " This could have been quite a smart Commando-type game, but presents no real challenge requires no skill. It's just driving around a desert of disappointing graphics, and the only plus point is that it's fast-moving "

DAVE

59%

 "What a disappointment – the scrolling is jerky, the graphics are dismal and colour clashes all the time, Now and again you get a

smile from Jackal because of the ways you can die - for instance, if you run into a little stick man with your tank you blow up! But there's no playability here. "

COMMENTS

Joysticks: Kempston, Sinclair Graphics: simple, bad attribute problems Sound: annoying tune and spot

effects Options: definable keys General rating: a boring and bad-

	_
Presentation	
Graphics	
Playability	
Addictive qualities	

looking arcade conversion

PHANTOM CLUB

Producer: Ocean Retail price: £7.95 Author: Dusko Dimitrijevic

has swamped the Phantom Club, and all the members bar one have cumbed to the dreadful succumbed dreadful overlord Zarg. Plutus is the sole member of this exclusive group who is still a good boy - and to defeat the repulsive Zarg, Plutus must work his way up through the ranks of the Phantom Club, exploring the club's huge exploring the club's huge headquarters to build up his

NICK

" Phantom Club is just like M.O.V.I.E., That was the first full-price game I ever bought, but because I couldn't get very far it soon lost its appeal. And the same goes for Phantom Club. The 3-D graphics are confusing because so much detail has been crammed in, and the cofour is a bit too bright. The nasties just get in the way without doing anything much apart from making a sword at the bottom of the screen (representing Plutus's strength) a bit shorter. Phantom Club is presented well, but holds nothing new or exciting." nothing new or exciting.



BYM

Games like this have been coming off the production lines for three years, ever since Knight Lore. I'm bored with them. In Phantom Club just the choice of colours is enough to turn your stomach, and as for Plutus, the poor bloke can't do more than one thing at a time (even walking and turning corners simultaneously seems to be too much for him). difficulties manoeuvrability, combined with the endless chambers, make Phantom Club an infuriating and lengthy game.

But as Plutus roams through the 550-odd rooms, his former friends will use their powers to be as mischievous as possible. Some have taken the forms of monks, others are man spiders, and Plutus may need to spend several shots

on them.

And the members of the Phantom Club are not the only hazards; some inanimate objects also drain our champion's energy, and to avoid them Plutus must use his athletic ability to the full.

psychic bolt from Plutus's forehead will devastate anyone or anything that gets in his way. But it too uses energy.

Some rooms contain screens which tell you how to escape and get to the next level. Most of these require Plutus to shoot a particular object or character, such as Psi-Man, who has the power to block room exits. Psi-Man's power can only be overcome by destroying his astral projection, which takes the form of a bird.

Useful features can be acquired by touching the floating sphere (an extra life), the floating diamond (extra speed) and the spinning sphere (a large bonus score).

Yugoslavian programmer Dusko Dimitrijevic first carne to fame with Imagine's M.O.V.I.E. (93% Overall in Issue 26), an arcade adventure set in New York's gangster world and presented in a similar 3-D style to Phantom Club.

COMMENTS

Joysticks: Cursor, Kempston, Graphics: monochromatic

forced perspective 3-D Sound: spot effects General rating: a disappointing 3-D cliché from the great programmer of M.O.V.I.E.

qualities

RENTAKILL RITA

Producer: Mastertronic Retail price: £1.99 Author: Robin Thompson

avishing Rentakill Rita is faced with the most difficult task of her cleaning career to rid the ancestral pile Little Ditching of all its bugs and beasties

But this mega Mrs Mopp will have to do more than swat a few insects with a rolled-up newspaper and flush them down

BYM

At last a 3-D maze game with decent controls: none of this rotation stuff! A shame, then, that it is let down by a few problems. Killing the nasties is a precarious business which damages the playability considerably, and some screens are vicious to the eyes. Besides, this multitude of 3-D arcade games is really getting on my

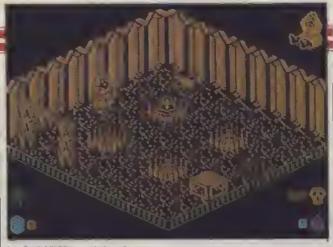
the loo. The gigantic spiders and flies of Little Ditching call for different methods.

Rita can splat them with the crushing weight of a Rita lookalike, suspended from the ceiling - if she can solve the problems in bringing it downward with flattening force

Alternatively, Rita can spray the spiders and flies with a deadly gas, but first she has to find the spray

Another problem is that the house isn't exactly a one up/ one down Barrett starter home. One room leads to another, and many contain not a three-piece suite in a subtle purple Draton, but hideous traps that can easily end

PAUL



Rentakilt Rita: good clean fun.

the courageous cleaning lady's life: spikes spear her, electrified floors fry her, trundling balls mow her down and robots rub her out.

To get through these rulnous rooms Rita must work out Ingenious methods, walking, jumping and using levitating and floating blocks.

Cans of food can also be collected by Rita to get her through the day - housework is a full-time job.

COMMENTS

Joysticks: Cursor, Kempston, Graphics: monochromatic, the usual isometric 3-D Options; definable keys General rating: a derivative 3-O game good for a few plays

Presentation Graphics
Playability
Addictive qualities
OVERALL

"Strange name, but nothing much strange about the game. It's Attack Of The Killer Tomatoes without all the fun and excitement; and though the problems and graphics are very similar to Head Over Heels the 3-D presentation of Rentakill Rita is much harder to acclimatise to. Still, though the halo around Rita's body is annoying at first, the pixel-packed background makes this game look nearly as real as the genre ever will. The budget market is ideal for this kind of games – all the ideas have been used and nebody's expecting anything original."

"Anarchy is an interesting shoot-'em-up with a touch of strategy. The graphics are simple but smooth and effective, despite some blockiness – and the gameplay is fun, with fast shooting action, spoiled only by having to start each life at the beginning of a fevel replenished with baddies. The replay mode shows programming initiative, though it's not much practical use, and Anarchy is a great buy."

NARCHY

Producer: Rack-It Retail price: £2.99

Authors: Dominic Robinson, Michael Sentinella

n Dominic Robinson's latest game, for Hewson's recently-launched budget label Rack-It, he CRASH-Smashing star programmer responsible putting Uridium and Zynaps on the Spectrum sets the player a shoot-'em-up puzzle with a standard space scenario.

The planet Sentinel 4 has been overun by rebels who must be suppressed. The only way to do it is by entering the rebels' security complex and destroying their weapons. So you drive an interceptor unit equipped with cannon through the complex (shown in bird's-eye-view, changing screens horizontally), moving along the passageways created by structural blocks and

Anarchy: tough to keep control

ROBIN

" Anarchy slightly of the Bouldardash genre, but in fact it's a novel variation on the well-worn Despite very average graphics it's an enjoyable game, with a simple but addictive idea playable from the word go!" shoot-'em-up

cuboid weapon-containers

The containers can easily be blasted - but if you get too close to them with the Interceptor it won't destroy them. And there's a time limit of two minutes for each of the

great buy.

BYM

16 levels.

Deadly rebel security droids patrol each of the complex floors. At first they may be slow, but as more of the weapon-containers are destroyed and you reach higher levels, they become more aggressive and tess predictable. The Interceptor's cannon can immobilise them, but the effect is temporary. When immobilised the guards can be pushed around by your interceptor's fire power, allowing you to clear narrow passageways that they block.

And every fifth building of the

MIKE

" There's lots of fun to be had from this cute little puzzle game—the graphics are neat and well-cotoured, and it's incredibly addictive.

because of their these levels are weapons; importance, guarded by special security droids remorselessly which intruders.

COMMENTS

Joysticks: Cursor, Kempston,

Graphics: clear and colourful Sound: good spot effects Options: definable keys; twoplayer option; computer can replay the game for you to

General rating: a straightforward, addictive puzzle shoot-'em-up - as good as Its Dominic Robinson pedigree

ayability ddictive qualities VERALL





DASH Christmas Special 1987

"OH NO COO" .



PERMARKET

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do you follow? You have to be there, really.
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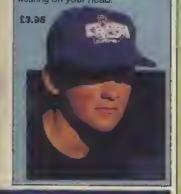
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1985

1986

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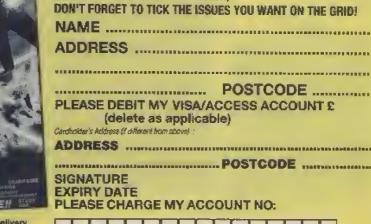
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ARACEN

Producer: Americana Retail price: £2.99

lan, a knight of the crusades. is out to destroy the infidel Saracens in the medieval Holy Land. But his knightly prowess is certain to be sorely tested, for many warriors block the path to the Saracens' evil chief, whom Lian must destroy to move to the next of 40 levels.

And Llan must work his way through a maze of brick and stone passages, magic doors and oneway entrances to find and kill the chief.

Lian's longbow is some help; arrows lie around the play area, and Llan can fire in the direction in

which they point.

With these arrows, Lian can detonate packs of obstructing bombs, grenades, blast his way through brickwork and destroy the white crosses which open magic doors. And if there aren't enough arrows pointing in the appropriate direction, the medieval soldier can create some more by shooting an arrow marker.

Other doors require not such heavy-handed tactics, but keys

which Llan can collect.

The progress of enemy soldiers like coloured snowflakes rolling about the maze - can be stopped, If Lian takes careful aim and shoots at a spiral wall-maker, brickwork is instantly produced to immures the oncoming Saracen squaddies.

And to give Llan some brief

Saracen: shooting snowflakes in the desert

SC:000

respite from the tension, he can reach the relative tranquility of a safety zone, where he can't be touched by enemy soldiers or deadly bouncing cannonballs. Fair's fair, though (or, rather, Llan's fair, will appropriate the can't be touched.) fairpwilgwyngyllgogerychwyrn-drobwllilantysiliogogogoch), and Llan can't shoot arrows or pick up objects in the safety zones.

CRITICISM

Another typical budget game small, fast, jerky graphics, little

gameplay. A few ideas in Saracen, such as picking up directional fire power, are great - but their brilliance is tarnished by the appalling graphics. The built-in antiboredom device is the option of starting on any level, but it doesn't take long to get bored with every screen there is.

 " Saracen didn't really melt my joystick — In fact, it's dead payatek — In Tact, it's dead boring, very simple with crummy graphics. There's only one real challenge — getting to the next level — and the gameplay consists of running around shooting weird-looking (hardly Saracen-likel) objects." Saracen-like!) objects.

DAVE -5

43

-3

COMMENTS

Joysticks: Cursor, Kempston,

Graphics: poor Options: start on any of 40 levels General rating: hideous and uninteresting

Playability RALL

DEVIANTS

Producer: Players Retail price: £1.99

Author: Colin Swinbourne

he deviants, a semihuman race left over from Earth's early occupation of a distant world, have stirred their angry bones. They start changing their asteroid home into a massive astral battle station and look to

other worlds to conquer.

A crack squad of Starwarriors was sent to ensure that the deviants plans are thwarted - but you are all that remain of that once bold band, and your last task is to prime the mechanisms of the 30 nuclear weapons that your fellow fighters have laid,

platform to Moving from

BYM

" Having to shoot deviants more than gats annoying, and their superior agility cramps your movement on every screen. And there's no information about how to set the bombs, which makes the game very short and pointiess till you've found out how to do it. Dark, atmospheric, graphics, are atmospheric, graphics are the only good point. "

platform, you run and jump your way past the deviants who patrol base, visiting a recharging station when too much fighting has exhausted you. (You can also replenish your blaster's ammunition on some levels.)

Teleports at strategic points provide fast access to other sections of the asteroid base. But

combat years ago has damaged them, so they're unreliable, When contact is finally made with an unprogrammed nuclear

PAUL

" I've been eagerly awaiting the next game from the programmer of Joe Biade – but i'm disappointed by Deviants. It's a pity Colin Swinbourne didn't try something a bit more adventurous than an extension of Virgin Games's Dan Dare, and Deviants has too many features of Joe Blade as well. The play area is very large and the graphics are many and varied, but still the game is disappointing."

device, six activator valves appear onscreen. To prime one of these bombs, every valve must be closed with six corresponding keys. The task is complicated, however, by the fact that the valves are interlinked – close one

Deviants: programmer Colin Swinbourne leaves the straight and narrow

and another may open. And a countdown shows how many seconds remain before the bomb self-destructs.

Programmer Swinbourne's Joe Blade (also from Players) was found very playable and addictive a few months ago, earning 84% in Issue 44. The world leved it, too, and it sat at the top of the sales charts for more than a month.

COMMENTS

Joysticks: Cursor, Kempston, Graphics: good Options: definable keys.
Sound: good tune and effects.
General rating: Imited gameplay, disappointing from the author of Joe Blade

Presentation Playability Addictive qualities OVERALL

嘇幓șșșș繜媈緶縺媈縺縺鵣鵣鵣鵣媙嬔襐暭襐撎樻樻

RIDING THE RAPIDS

Producer: Players Retail price: £1.99 Authors: Paul Griffiths and Andrew Severn

our bottom's just above the water line sitting in a cance, so grab your paddle and get ready to go when the green light's The course record is your

But oh so slowly

target in Players's simulation, and you've only got a handful of minutes to beat it.

You can choose from four courses - not simple little streams, but wild waters, full of hazards such as rocks, banks and islands. All these must be avoided and the guided downstream a series of gates, through constructed of pairs of hanging

FRULTS

Catching one of these gates can impale you helplessly while others go on to beat the record – and,

go on to east the record - and, adding injury to insult, touching a gate pole or missing the gate entirely gives you penalty points.

And you can capsize if you're not careful; then frantic paddling in all directions is the only way to get out of a damp, damp situation.

But it's all the agent to the careful transport.

But it's all too easy to use up your energy by strenuous paddling. Watch the clock at the side of the screen, but also keep a careful eye on your energy level. Good paddling!

 " Riding The Rapids is a wellpresented little mover, but it's so simple and unrealistic it soon gets boring. The graphics are fine-very simple, but effective - but there's hardly any gameplay. The inlay promises the action 'will have your pulse racing as fast as the current' but if you leave your cance it just drifts downstream, hardly creating the impression of a fast-moving

CRITICISM

mountain river.

iniand: Yet all these are hazards of canceling, according to Riding The Rapids. The controls are confusing, too, with O taking you down the screen and A taking you up—that is, if you can remember which way you are facing. Riding The Rapids is difficult and unrealistic, so give me the real river any day." me the real river any day. COMMENTS loysticks: Kempston, Sinclair Graphics: well-defined, monochromatic, simple Options: choice of four courses

['ve

 "I've done plenty of canceing, but never any like this. Never have I been grounded by poles hanging above the water, never have I been grounded by

waves, and I certainly have never been able to dump the nose of my canoe three feet inland! Yet all these are hazards

Presentation Playability Addictive qualities OVERALL

General rating: watered-down gameplay in another 'simulation' right out of touch with reality

(compare Top Ten Hits's Grid Iron)

GRID IRON

Producer: Top Ten Hits Retail price: £1.99

ou've come a long way since managing the Wigan Wagglebottoms American football team. The USA called and

now you are in great demand. In your coach's bank balance you have a cool quarter-million bucks. With this mountain of greenbacks you can buy and sell players in an attempt to field the best team, beat the other clubs and win in that good of American sporting tradition, the Superbowl. At the start of the game you can

choose your level of coaching expertise, and the team you'll to propel to victory. But to improve the team and achieve your ambitions you have access to the

transfer market.

You can call up financial statements showing your balance, the availability of loans and any loan repayments outstanding, and arrangements for making loan repayments appear before each There's also a list of match. available players can be called up, showing their value and skill and energy levels. And yet another list reserve players substitute for playing members so that advantage can be taken of their enhanced energy or skill

When a game is in progress on the field, the morale, skill and energy levels of both teams are shown and these are crucial in determining the outcome - though luck can play its part. The match is shown in 3-D, with both sides lining up on the gridinon.

Grid Irom tootball mismanaged



At the end of the match other recent fixture results are shown, and these are further translated league-table positions. financial report then displays the gate money from that match, interest payment, the wage bill and your bank balance.

To measure your progress en route to the big time, a rating screen shows the total value of your squad, its morale, skill and energy levels, the team's league position and your rating as coach... because success depends on you.

CRITICISM

"I must admit to once being addicted Quarter to magazine, which deals entirely with the play of this contorted version of rugby - but Grid Iron entirely with management side. There are plenty of chirpy features but plenty of problems too; for instance, you can't make more than one change in the team unless you've got an injured player. Grid Iron is injured player, Grid Iron is enjoyable to sit down with for a long time, but I look forward to a game where you can really play American football. "

" Grid from is the worst sports game I have ever played. There is simply nothing to it but inaccuracy after inaccuracy. Players can do more or less anything - you can get a team up entirely quarterbacks which makes the simplistic game much too easy: if you manage to get a good team (hardly difficult) nothing can touch you. The financial aspect doesn't make sense either; I played the entire league, beating everyone by a huge margin, and still had a balance of about \$100,000 without having taken any loans. I then won the Superbowl 28-0 (notice the way that your team and your opponents only score in multiples of seven, yet all the other games in the league have completely random scores and acquired an \$80,000 debt. How? I don't know, But any money you invest in Grid Iron will be wasted." MIKE 06%

COMMENTS

Joysticks: none Graphics: limited - Mike gave them 02% General rating: a team-

management game with the 'realistic' details so appallingly flawed it's worthless

Presentation Graphics Playability Addictive qualities OVERALL



RICOCHET

Producer: Firebird Silver Retail price: £1.99 Author: Lee Dowthwaite

t's a frightening problem from the very start — there are too many particles trying to cram into a universe which can't hold their ever-increasing bulk. It's a bit like trying to squeeze an elephant into a pair of trousers; something's going to give, and this time it's sure to be more than a zip. The bulk of the universe must not get any greater, or it'll be goodbye kind world in this zany Breakout-style

game.
At the top of the screen are the rectangular surplus particles, arranged to form a WALL (Wacky

arranged to form a WALL (Wacky Atomic Lethal Layer). By moving the BAT (the Bi-Atomic Tracker) horizontally and vertically, you can guide the circular Bi-Atomic Wall Loppers (BAWLs) which slide across the screen to the blocks above. When a surplus particle block is struck, it's destroyed and

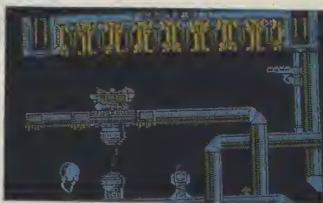
your score increases. 10,000 points give you an extra life (just one measly extra life? -Man Ed), and after clearing one screen you could need that life to take on the next – and a different configuration of particles – because the energy flux powering your BAT can be destroyed by repeated BAWI hits.

Extra weapons can be gathered by moving the BAT into the icons that glide horizontally across the screen. This way points, a double BAT and an extra BAWL can be acquired.

Try to save the universe if you can – we've all got something on next Sunday.

CRITICISM

This could become a regular feature: reviews on this week's version of Breakout And Ricochet could be the worst yet - the BAT doesn't even move fast enough to deflect the BAWLSI Vertical movement is only useful when a bonus item crawls across the screen, and even then it usually gets you into further troubte."



Ricachet: Interior Breakout clone of the week

 "Ricochet is rubbish, offering the player nothing that hasn't already been on the market in many forms. The game is slow, unplayable and unaddictive."

• "Ricochet gets addictive after a while. The graphics are simple but effective and the sound FX aren't bad. Andit's not just another Breakout clone, whatever the packaging suggests - the BAT can go up and down as well as left and right, the freedom of movement giving a more interesting game."

MIKE

" Despite decent graphics,

COMMENTS

Joysticks: Cursor, Kempston, Sinclair Graphics: *Breakout*-style, colour Sound: spot FX Options; definable keys General rating: BAD (*Breakout*

Awfully Done)

resentation	51%
iraphics	46%
layability	36%
ddictive qualities	32%
VERALL	20.00

AGENT X II

Producer: Mastertronic Retail price: £1.99 Authors: Software Creations

othersome spots can spring up on even the finest skin, and that's just what the mad professor intends. Equipped with his awesome Zit-Ray, the loeny don is out to ruin the faces of thousands of people with ineradicable acne. (He's slightly less ambitious than the mad professor of Mastertronic's original Agent X (85% Overall in Issue 37), who thought starting World War III would do fiendishly.)

Agent X is the only man who can

Agent X is the only man who can stop this spotty caper. But to do that he must leave this planet, travel to the moon, and overcome the professor's traps to find the homid old man himself.

With a jet pack strapped to his back, X takes a scroll across the surface of the moon, where wave after wave of attacking energy blobs and missiles come at him, sometimes fooling the unwary player by unpredictably changing direction.

But to defend himself against orbs and missites, X carries a blaster. When he destroys an attack by a group of aliens, a capsule appears which increases the power of his blaster.

If our operative survives, this mayhem, he finds himself in an underground environment of eight vertically-scrolling screens. Now X must leap from platform to platform gathering four floating parts of an electronic code. When he has the codes he needs, our agent inputs them into computer terminals.

That's all very well in principle; but some terrifying elephant-noses and energy globs are there to stop him, and there's only the blaster to rely on.

blaster to rely on.

If our hero survives this hazard, he progresses to the next (it would probably be simpler to buy some cream at Boots). Here he must

disappointment after the fun and frolics of its predecessor. Still, the title screen is neat, with billions of different colours per attribute square, and the many tunes add something to a dull and unplayable game."

manipulate a horizontally movable bat, using a ball to knock down the wall behind which the mad professor hides. (Otherwise everyone's skin will *Breakout*, we suppose.)

X's task is complicated by the deranged professor's own bat - which moves horizontally on a

NICK

"Slick title screens and average graphics don't make a game. Here the graphics are detailed and the animation attractive, but colour clash is a problem. And there's very fittle to do in Agent X II — in parts very like Firebird's Sidewize (50% Issue 44) — so it's a disappointing follow-up."

higher plane! But if he has energy and patience enough when all the bricks are destroyed, the mad professor can be defeated and everyone saves their face.

Agent X II: another mad professor, another poor sequel



COMMENTS

Joysticks: Kempsfon,
Sinclair, Cursor
Graphics: colourful areas on
all stages
Sound: superb tune on the first
level, sampled title tune
Options: definable keys
General rating: a
disappointing sequel, with
each section derivative of a
different style

Presentation Graphics Riayability Addictive qualities OVERALL

STAR PILOT

Producer: Firebird Silver Retail price: £1.99 Author: J Bond (sic)

fter a tricky interview down at the careers office, you are finally accepted as a star pilot, with excellent prospects of becoming a legend of the space waves. And now it's the first big

BYM

"Despite a tiny play area, confusing graphics, and slow play, I love it! The graphics are well-designed, and the vertical scrolling is near perfection. The two-player, split-screen game style isn't original but works exceptionally well in Star Pilot. And don't think for one second that just because it's slow gonna be easy. Star Pilot is full of nasties, minds set on your blood, and it's an action-packed mission. "

9:396

assignment — everyone turns to you when a few dozen alien spacecraft have to be destroyed, pronto.

MIKE "The graphics are dull and boring; the concept is simple and outdated; the two-player mode is very slow. Still, Star Pilot is reasonable as one-player shoot-'em-ups go, and worth a look if you're really desperate for a blast."

52%

0033980

oz.

Star Pilot: shooting 'em up, while you wait

Your craft can nip left and right, accelerate decelerate. and manoeuvring to attention of the to escape the attention of the bomb-laying space vehicles that flit over the surface of the alien space base ahead of you. Bomb launchers on the surface are lining you up in their sights, too .

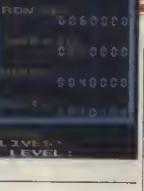
Your skills are tested as you thread the craft around a series of deadly barriers and projections.

For protection, your ship is equipped with a forward-firing cannon and a limitless supply of ammunition, which can take out all opposition craft.

NICK

" This is too much a copy of Mirrorsoft's Moonstrike (77% Overall in Issue 45), and a flawed one at that: the play area is ridiculously small, and in two-player mode the whole game slows down to a snail's pace. Those faults apart, though, Star Pilot is pretty good. The alien graphics are quite effective, and there are some fantastic tunes and sound FX, '

50%



COMMENTS

Joysticks: Kempston Graphics: mediocre Sound: good tune Options: definable keys; two can play at once General rating: the sluggish two-player mode apart, Star Pilotis a decent, unremarkable shoot-'em-up. Bym's Smash rating dragged it up from the

Presentation Graphic Playability Addictive qualities OVERALL

654

XANTHIUS

Producer: Players Retail price: £1.99 Authors: Andy and Martin Severn

nce upon a time on the planet Xanthius, many atmosphere-processing (AP) plants were constructed by a crew of mechanoid navvios. But at eight of these plants the generators have developed faults of and in Xanthius you are sent to carry out assential repairs.

Ensconced in a spindly biped Protopod, you start working your way through the multifloored world where antigravity beams and automatic platform connect levels.

Froth creepers and snuffling crustaceans occupy the pathways; some of this assorted crawling maggotry adds to the Protopod's energy, but some diminishes it.

And as the jerry-built generators fail, corrosive gases are formed that slowly decay the Protopod with lethal consequences. Your Protopod's state of health is shown at the top of the screen.

To repair a generator, inject energy and wait for the protective outer weather shield to part. Then move the Protopod onto the generator's uncovered centra.

PAUL

"The graphics in Xanthius just can't be faulted - they're smooth, colourful and well-detailed, making the game a delight to look at. The protopod is a great graphic, you like Arachaus 4 from very like Arachnus 4 from Amaurote. But there's no variety - meeting the same old meanies, over and over again, gets very boring.

where a read-out can be obtained.

that'll easily be 60 quid, guv). So stop leaning on your shovel, and get on with it.

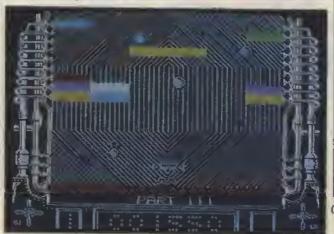
BEN

"Gosh, what pretty graphics! What a nice idea for a game! And great animation! Bit unoriginal, though. Mmmmm... the presentation isn't bad, nice scrolly message. Hang on, where's the game? Oh, there it is, not much to it, though, all you do is jump around and fix the thingies – it's a bit boring. And aren't those graphics a bit glitchy every now and then, too? Look – that ship's rather like the one in Amaurots. Doesn't move very realistically, though ... what else is in this month? "

Once faults have diagnosed, replacement parts can called up from the spares division (and with labour costs

Graphics programmer Martin Severn, much praised by the CRASH reviewers, has also done Anfractuos and Joe Blade (loading screen), and is working on Riding The Rapids (see this month's Dreviews).

Xanthius: the gasman cometh



COMMENTS

Joysticks: Kempston, Sinclair Graphics: large and colourful platforms with detailed characters.

Sound: spot effects General rating: great graphics but not much playability

Presentation Graphics
Playability
Addictive qualities
OVERALL

CRASH Christmas 1987 171



Now he knows how you feel when a POKE won't work

MIKE DUNN was vanquished in the CRASH Challenge two issues ago - but it's his turn to laugh when Playing Tips Editor Nick Roberts falls foul of a visiting champion in Dan Dare

HE SUN rose to meet a cold, overcast Saturday morning in Ludlow and decided to go back to bed, exactly as I did. But eventually I managed to surface, and, buffeted by the gale-force winds, struggled my way down the

High Street and staggered into the

Towers.
Out of the corner of my eye I glimpsed a mysterious figure in the shadows. Paul Tregldgo had arrived, all the way from Dudley in the West Midlands (and I had problems walking down the road

to the office?). The eternal struggle between Good and Evil, CRASH writer and reader, was once again to be enacted, and two Spectrums had been prepared for the highlight of the day . . .

ROUND ONE

Two sweating, nervous, pro players sit hunched over their Spectrums (almostl), loaded and ready with their copies of Virgin Games's Dan Dare . . . and they're off!

Paul is the first to fall foul of the treens – after only 20 seconds, he loses ten minutes. Nick takes an early lead, collects an SDS key and survives a whole minute before

getting thrown in the prison. Is there a win on the cards here? Of course not. Nick, after losing 20 game minutes in a mere nine seconds of real time, slides in behind Paul, who craises into the lead carrying 5425 points. But what's this? Amere 350 points on, Nick calmly zooms in from nowhere to take the lead. The battle is on.

The close fight continues, the lead going from one to the other constantly. Paul is the first to make 10000, with one hour 40 minutes still left. But Nick's 10000, just a minute behind in real time, is made with only 13 minutes on his game fimed

A quick session in prison, and Nickisout, with two minutes 45 left and 50 seconds later, his third SDS key opens the door to the fourth level. Unfortunately, Paul is well on the way to his fourth SDS

And then it's all over. Nick's ego collapses at the same time as Dan Dare's energy, despite a fairly respectable 14050 on the score table

However, Paul seems to be well in control, still with just under an hour and 20 minutes on the clock and a score of 15075. He plays on in the true style of a victor, the

fourth key going in at one hour eight mintes and one second. Suppressing his self-pity, Nick tries to create an impression of coolness by looking at his watch in a very impatient manner – but Paul stays calm in the face of at least five captures, getting the fifth SDS key in with eleven minutes left, and finally he's completed the game in 10 minutes and 45 seconds, with a pretty def score of 23325

PAUL: 23325 NICK: 14050

ROUND TWO

Abiding by the rules of the Playing Standards Association, we swap the players around (just in case Nick's been POKEing one of the Spectrums) and bid them resume the slaughter ... er ... Challenge.

Taking the early lead again, Nick pushes out in front with a huge advantage of 600 points over Paul's total of 700.

Paul's total of 700.

Then, ahead by 20 seconds real time but ten minutes behind in the game, Nick gets the SDS key in.

Paul is still technically ahead with one hour 58 minutes on the clock. Nick struggles to keep up with Paul but falls dismally. The next SDS from Paul is in et 10175, Nick trailing, for a change with 200

substrom Paulis iner 10175, Nick trailing, for a change, with 6200. Nick's second SDS key goes In at exactly the same time as Paul's third, Nick getting past the 10000 mark with just over an hour left. Paul, with 14300 points and an hour and 42 minutes on the clock,

again makes his lead clear.

Now Nick's third SDS is in with
50 minutes left. Paul matches him
soon after with his fourth key, still with an hour and 17 minutes to complete the game in. And

CRASH Christmas Special 1987



TO CREAM THE IMPOSSIBLE TREEN

VIRGIN GAMES's Dan Dare, the VIRGIN GAMES's Dan Dare, the game of this month's Challenge, earned 92% Overall in CRASH issue 32. The Eagle comic character was brought by The Gang Of Five into a brilliantly colourful, graphically intricate, action-packed multilevel Spectrum world of some 130 screens. (And if you can say that sentence without stopping for breath you're probably strong enough to play Dan Dare.)

Dare.)
It's set on a rogue asteroid with which the fantastically evil fittle Mekon intends to destroy Earth Cur 'pilot of the future' must, of course, explore the intricacies of

the asteroid's many rooms and lifts, avoid the Mekon's Treen guards and find 'SDS keys' to assemble the scattered parts of assemble the scattered parts of the complex's self-destruct mechanism. All the time there's a stopwarch ticking, and if Dan's knocked out by a Treen you lose minutes of game time – it's not a task for the Mekon mild.

it all sounds standard Sunday-atternoon stuff, but the superb col-our and animation, the speed of gamapiay and the nice touch of comic-strippish onscreen mes-sages make Dan Date one of the best tie-ins around.





No hard feetings

DISASTER. Nick loses loads of time, and just manages the fourth SDS key before dying with 18925, an improvement on his last game. Fighting back the tears, Nick

tooks up to see Paul miles ahead with 54 game minutes left, and 20125 points. Paul, a true hero, carries on again, and finally expires with 25775 points

PAUL: 25775 NICK: 18925

And so Paul Tregidgo has won the Dan Dare Challenge, and all

there's left to do is make excuses for yet another CRASH reviewer's fudging fingers (and he a Playing Tips Ed too! - Man Ed). But a bit of good has come out

ofit. We all know how to beat Nick now: following Paul Tregidgo's example, we say Playing Tips is the best column in the magazine, and his ego swells so much he thinks he doesn't have to try to win the game! Easy!

Oh, and there's one last thing. Paul asked me to say hello to Marc Bunch, Neil Williamson, Owen Calahan, and Mark Marshallsay. (Out of the question - Man Ed)

WE'LL TRY OUR VERY HARDEST TO NEXT

HONEST WE W

But there's not much hope for us now. Robin Candy refuses to play a Challenge because it wouldn't fit in with his rockstar image, David Peters and Man Ed always manage to remember some urgent appointment whenever the subject is mentioned, Roger Kean is busy moving from mag to mag and Lloyd Mangram – well, we haven't dared ask.

There is, however, Ben Stone. And Ben has offered to play ANYONE in Elite's Commando for the next Chaîtenge, which will take place early in the New Year and be reported in Issue

Interested? Just fill in the form and rush it to CRASH Challenge, CRASH, PO Box 10, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1DB.

If your wish isn't our Commando, you can always choose another game - anything Smashed in 1987 (and, yes, we know Commando is two years old - but maintaining the honour of CRASH demands we bend the rules).

Dear Ben Stone
I challenge you to play Commando – and may the bes
(That'll be me, because I've already scored
OR TAKE THE EASY WAY OUT AND TICK THIS BOX:
I'm too much of a wimp to play Ben in Commando but I'd still like my name put in the hat for a future Challenge – perhaps for First Steps With The Mr Men please?
well, no, really for
in which I've already scored
NAME
ADDRESS
######################################
TELEPHONE NUMBER

you're selected for the Challenge we'll pay your fare to Ludlow and home again, keep you warm and

AGE

well-fed while you're here, and probably steal the shirt off your back too

TAKE ME TO YOUR LIEDE

JON BATES seeks words for his 128 carol it's a chance to win a £25 record token plus a **CRASH cap and T-shirt!**

JUST to be different, we've set you a competition that demands real artistic skill - the feeling for music and words etc. All you have to do is think up a neat set of Christmassy words to fit this specially-composed tune (no star/ far bright/night child/mild rhymes, please!), you can either play it from pleasel), you can either play it from the score or run the program on a 128K Spectrum. If you have a 48K Spectrum you can follow the first part from 'MELODYA' to 'BREAKA'; if you want to miss out on the graphics merely enter lines 60 to 300 (shame on you, I spent ages trying to get them right – they took a lot longer than the musici). The format could be chorus, verse (albeit quite short) chorus

verse (albeit quite short), chorus.

but we'll accept any literary variations – so sharpen up yer pencils and put your best trochaic foots and lambic pentameters forward

The best set of words selected

you know, the ones whose decision is always final – will win its author a £25 record token, a CRASH cap and T-shirt (state on your entry which one you'd like of all those advertised on pages 166-167) and poetic fame with the winning words printed in CRASH.

Send your Christmas verse to FA LA COMP, CRASH, PO Box 10, Ludiow, Shropshire SY8 10B to arrive by February 1. Best of luck, and have a safe, happy Christmas and New Year; the Bates musical motel reopens for business as normal next month. (Send any Spectromusical questions or news to me at the same CRASH address, marked 'Tech Niche'.)

PS A big thank you to Greg and Neville Coss for entering the bulk of the program as I was hastily working it out and many thanks to Simon N Goodwin for print-outs

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FLASH 0 BORDER 1: PAPER 1: INK 6 20 PRINT "Twinkle, Twinkle?" 30 ٠ FOR n=1 TO 50: GO SUB 340: NEXT n 40 PRINT AT 12,0;"INTRO STARTS NOW After a bit the main tune will start . . . that's when you start your words!!" . LET i\$="I/NTROA/M7T145UX1000W0 60 LET d\$="06eeeeeee" 70 . 80 LET . t\$="!MELODYA!(V1105N6D#C5b6ag5# f6e#t5g9a6D#C5b6ag5#f6e#t5e9d)" LET m\$="IMID-DLEA!(V1305N5eg3#fed5e3g#fe5d) (V11N5\$eg3f\$ed5\$e3gf\$e5d)" 100 LET . k\$="!BREAKA!(UX1000W6N3\$ED\$Eg)" 110 LET \$="IINTROBIM7UX1000W0 05N9&& (3b#CD#Fb#CD#Fb#CD#Fb#CD#F)" 120 LET e\$="#C#C#CDDDbb" 130 LET u\$="!MELODYB!(V905D#fa #Cgabg04AD#FGbD# FaEgb#FaDGbA#CEA#C EA#C05D#fa#Cgabg04AD#FGbD #FaEgb#FaDEg#faDgaDeD)" 140 LET ø n\$="'(MIDDLEBI(V1304N5CE3DCb5C3E . DC5b)(V11N5C\$E3DC\$b5C3\$EDC5\$b)" . 150 LET ě (\$="'IBREAKBI(03N3C&8&3&5\$a7\$b3&)" 160 LET o\$="!INTROCIMTUX1000WO 05N9&&&&3gabDgabDgabDgabD" 170 LET s\$="aAaAaAaA" 180 LET x\$="!ENDA!04N9D" 190 LET v\$="!MELODYC!(UX1000W003dDDd1D DDD3dD) 200 LET y\$="!ENDB!03N9D" 210 LET p\$="IMIDDLEC! UX200W3N7ab6C5D3E)V13N7ccccccc 220 LET z\$="!ENDCIV1303N9d" 230 LET q\$= "IBREAKCI(02N3C&8&3&5\$a7\$b3&)" 240 LET (\$= i\$+ i\$+ i\$+ i\$+ i\$+ i\$+ i\$+ i\$+ +i\$+i\$ +i\$+d\$ +d\$+d\$+d\$ 250 LET g\$=j\$+e\$+e\$+e\$+e\$ 260 LET h\$=0\$+s\$+s\$+s\$+s\$ 270 LET a\$=f\$+t\$+m\$+k\$+k \$+k\$+k\$+f\$+t\$+x\$ 280 LET b\$=g\$+u\$+n\$+l\$+g \$+u\$+y\$ 290 LET c\$=h\$+v\$+v\$+v\$+v \$+v\$+v\$+v\$+v\$+ p\$+q\$+h\$+v\$+v \$+v\$+v\$+v\$+v\$+ v\$+v\$+z\$ 300 PLAY a\$, b\$, c\$ 310 FLASH 1: FOR e = 1 TO 8: GO SUB 370: . NEXT e 320 FLASH 0: PRINT "(C)Jon Bates 1987 • HAPPY NEW YEAR • 330 STOP 340 BEEP 0.01, RND+20 350 PRINT AT RND+9+1,RND+30+1;"+" ٠ 360 RETURN 370 PAPER RND+7: INK9 380 LET 1=RND+20 390 LET c=RND+16 400 PRINT AT I,c; "MERRY CHRISTMAS" 410 PAPER 4: INK 2 420 PRINT AT 1+1,c; " FROM CRASH " 430 PLAY "T22005N3bD4g2a5b" 440 RETURN

DANKING THE TANK

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EDITORIAL ADVISOR Rosebud Hawkins **EDITOR** Miles Knighton FEATURES EDITOR Jack Burton STAFF WRITERS Andres Whitham-Smythe Jud Crunchbucket DESIGN AND LAYABOUT Bertie Brie

The whole of CRUNCH fanzine was constructed using Mirrorsoft's Fleet Street Editor Plus desktop publishing package, on the Amstrad PCW8256 computer. dumps on 8256 printer.

the (so called) new dimension. May I first of all congratulate and thank you on your 'risky' purchase of nur attempt at hitting the big time'.

The first thing to remember when reading Grunch (apart from the fact that it's not 'real') is that you CAN have YOUR may over what you would like in the mag. If you don't like something then say so. We're all sitting here ready to take constructive criticism (and praise - Miles) where it's due. I don't Know about you but I'm a

CRUNCH
CRUNCH fanzine was written,
'typeset' using Mirrorsoft's Fleet
Street Editor Plus and designed by
members of the CRASH team to show what's possible with

Though of course it's not a Though of course it's not a perfect simulation of fanzineediting – we did it at the Towers, for a start, not in someone's back bedroom! – we did find out how much could be done using only cheap computers and software and without resorting to the usual high technology with which

and without resorting to the usual high technology with which magazines are produced. The result, CRUNCH's first and last issue, should be a respite from the other 192 pages of this Christmas Special; normal factions files Fanzine File service resumes in the next CRASH.

bit annoyed with all these so-called magazines who thrust their opinions on their readers - it really BUGS me. We're not concerned with some bloke leaving a company or Ametrad's latest compact ironing board you obviously bought Grunch to read about computers and that's what we'll tell you about. Kappy Christmas and interesting reading!

720 Degrees

Producer: US Gold

Price : E7, 99

GO SKATEBOARDING WITH US GOLD

FOR SOME inexplicable reason you are dumped in Skate the toughest and City meanest town around. All you have to do is survive the day to day activities of this active environment. You must fly around this obstacle ridden area to certain skate parks situated at the North, South, East and West points. On your way to gaining money and medals at the each of the four parks you may come across salesmen on the edge of the sidewalk. At each of these stalls you can purchase extra equipment to enhance your performance, using the money gained at skate



REVIEWS. . .

parks. Extra money can be picked up on the streets around the town, and bonus money is given for each stunt performed. It's not all that easy though. After a short length of time a swarm of killer bees appears. To avoid these you must go to the nearest open park. Tickets to the parks are only gained once you have scored over a certain amount of points.



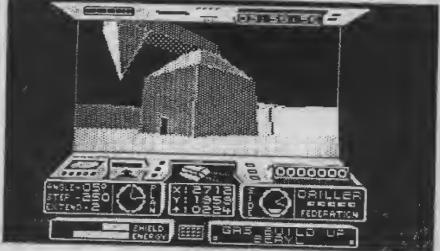
Therefore if you don't perform enough tricks you don't get enough money, subsequently the bees get you! To add more of a challenge various characters are scattered around the place, ranging from cyclists to breakdancers. This is, without a doubt, one of US Gold's best games to date. The concept is so original and the gameplay so effective. Let's hope they keep it up.

Jack Burton



Tip: Use your time wisely. Do lots of stunts in the town till the swarm of bees arrive. Then enter the next park rapidly!





DRILLER

Producer: Incentive

Price : E14.95

MORE DIMENSIONS THAN DOCTOR possible, therefore gaining a WHO'S TARDIS greater bonus. All

THE NEW dimension has arrived! The much advertised and hyped Driller finally appears on the Spectrum, and what an innovative game it is. The main feature of Oriller is the new graphics technique, Freescape tm. It has, apparently, taken over fourteen months to develop this revolutionary technique of producing (relatively) fast moving, solid and realistic objects. Freescape tm. allows you to see EVERY angle of EVERY object in the game. The first game to use Freescape tm. is Driller.

in this, almost demonstration, game you must travel around the moon, Mitra, looking for gas. Each of the areas you enter contains a variable

percentage of the total gas of the moon. By placing a rig in the right point in the area you can extract the highest amount of gas greater bonus. All over the planet are various obstacles which must be overcome to enter the next area such as steps, lifts and sentries. Of course all these are very easy to pass if you happen to find and jump in the reconnaissance jet, but to place the rigs you must go back to the excavation probe. The packaging is lavish containing a 32 page novella, a mapping model and a brand new dimension.

Miles Knighton



TIP: Use the jet to map out Driller, plan your route, and then jump in the transporter for drilling.



Game Set & Match (Compilation)

Producer: Ocean

Price : £12, 95 cass. £17.95 disk

MORE SPORTS THAN GRANDSTAND

YOU MAY have thought Track And Field had a few sporting events in it, but wait till you hear what's in Ocean's little sports extravaganza. In this latest of compilations, the Manchester software house Ocean have got together what they believe are the most wanted sports simulations on the Spectrum not necessarily the best (as everyone's got Match Day, Match Point and Steve Davis Snooker). What we have here is ten games covering 22 different sporting activites. Here's a brief summary of what the four cassette package contains:

WORLD SERIES BASEBALL

Received rave reviews when released as the new Imagine's first game back in 'BS. Still one of the most playable games of its genre.

TENNIS

This upgraded Match Point contains most of the features of tennis, i. e. one or two player and doubles, but lacks the realistic feel and speed that Match Point did so well to convey.

JONAH BARRINGTON'S SQUASH

You could almost say this is the real thing. You even get the eponymous and controversial squash player speaking the scores for you using the revolutionary Reprosound technique. JB's Squash has got everything, apart from somewhere to warm your balls up!

POOL

Not really as realistic or as fun to play as Steve Davis Snooker, but fans of the classic American ball game will have something to amuse themselves with.

PIING PONG

Programmer supreme Jonathan Smith shows how to make one SUPERTEST of the most enjoyable arcade: games succeed on the Spectrum. Loads of options. and even some superb tunes to keep the excitement running at a tremendous pace.

HYPER SPORTS

This is the real Track And Field of the bunch. Guide Hyper Bill through all the events (swimming, skeet shooting, long horse, triple jump, weight lifting and archery) and prove yourself to be waggler supremo. One for all high score fans.

SUPER SOCCER

I'm surprised Ocean brought this bad egg into the basket. There's more bugs in it than in the Russian Embassy. Match Day Il is on its way (see 'Watch Out') so | shouldn't even bother

playing it.

BARRY MCGUIGAN BOXING

Yet another in the long line of successful boxing simulations on the Spectrum. There's the whole world to compete against to gain that elusive World Championship. You can even alter the characteristics of your man. Get a friend along to play and you can bash the hell out of each other.

BASKETBALL

Despite it's recent full price release only four months ago, it doesn't give any more than any other game on the court. You'd be much better off with the 1985 team game of World Series Basketball - visually and aurally much better.

DALEY THOMPSON'S

The follow-up to DT's Decathlon didn't prove as popular, but provided a great variation of events and a strong challenge to the Epyx series. In Super-Test you get pistol shooting, cycling, spring board diving, giant slalom, rowing, penalties, ski jumping and tug o'war.

Game Set And Match is not just an ordinary compilation. I've no doubt that 'theme' compilations are the product of the future. Probably one of the best Christmas presents you could get, Buy it now, think of it as an investment.

Andres Whitham-Smythe



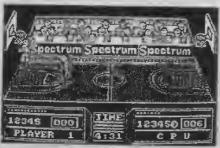




WADING THROUGH THE OCEAN

Match That!

After over three years on the market Jon Ritman's fabled soccer game has finally met its match, itself. Yes the jovial Londoner, after much waiting, has finally come up with a follow-up worthy of





the name Match Day II. More options, more graphics and improved sound could push its predecessor Match Day off the top of the league. The old team are back together again; Ritman's written the code; Bernie Drummond has designed the cute wire-frame graphics and Jon's old friend (whose name could not be disclosed for fear of kidnapping) is back again with some jivey beats. It should be on the streets now!

Grrr! Urghh! Aaggh!

The fabulous arcade game Combat School will be out for your Spectrum in time for Christmas - so you can stop all that grunting and groaning. Ocean's big arcade reference is not a case of blowing up countless enemies; you must battle against the instructor and yourself to become strong and quick enough for graduation to your first mission, and then all the violence can start. Training consists of five main sections; the assault course, firing range, arm wrestling, iron man course and hand to hand combat. If you happen to fall a bit short of these tough standards then you are given the chance to reprieve yourself through a test of chin-ups. Combat School gives some monochrome and some colour packed stages giving great value for money at only £7.95 on cassette.

More than just a game!

Ocean jumped in quick to license the Academy Award winning film, Platoon. Ocean keep insisting this is NOT another shoot em up. They have tried to represent the film accurately with six

different stages to complete and finally get out of the hell they call 'war'. The computer game will be released in conjunction with the RCA/Columbia video in early January.

Dunking without a digestive

After having little success with their ambitious basketball release of '85, World Series Basketball, Ocean are deciding to have another shot at the basket with the Dinamic programming team's Basket Master. This one-on-one simulator contains a two player option, slow motion close-up replay and cartoon style graphics. No doubt one to look for...

NEXT MUNF. . .

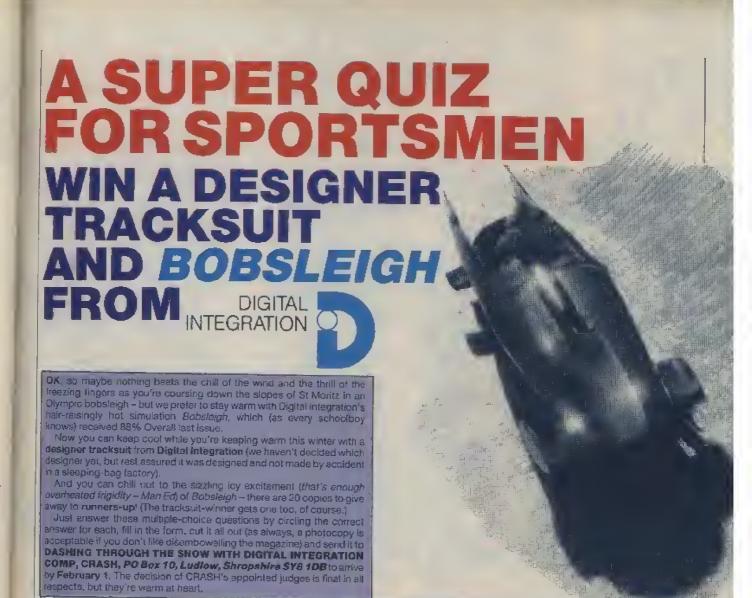
More reviews
than you could imagine.
Hopefully we'll be getting our
hands on: —
Match Day II Combat School
Basket Master Nebulus
Deviants Sidewalk
Slaine Outrun

OF COURSE it all really depends on software houses' attitude towards us. There's a lot of fanzines around, so only the most professionally and efficiently run outfits will survive.

Also: - A new column called 'What's Bugging You?'.

What's wrong with Ametrad's pricing policy? Are 16-bit machines worth buying now? We want YOUR views!

PLUS Expanded playing tips, expanded contents, expanded editorial, expanded reviews...(I think they get the message - Ed)



- 1 When was four-man bobsleighing first featured in the Winter Olympics?
 - a) 1904
- b) 1914
- d) 1924
- 2 Which country won the four-man AND two-man world bobsleighing championships this year (1987!)?
 - a) Sweden
 - b) Switzerland
 - c) Swaziland
- 3 In what year did British champs Tony Nash and Robin Dixon take the Olympic gold medal for bobsleighing - the only time the Brits
 - a) 1964
 - b) 1968
- 4 Who is the top British bobsleigh driver who worked with Digital integration on the game (and once beat Daley Thompson in the real-life decathlon)?
 - a) Nick Roberts
 - b) Nick Notte
 - c) Nick Phipps
- 5 Where will the February 1988 Winter Olympics be held?
 - a) Calgary, Canada
 - b) Helslinki, Finland
 - c) Innsbruck, Austria
- What is the official British bobsleighing body?
 - Bobsleigh Society Of Great Britain
 British Bobsleigh Association

 - c) British Bebsleighing Corporation

Bobsleigh: test your knowledge of the real thing



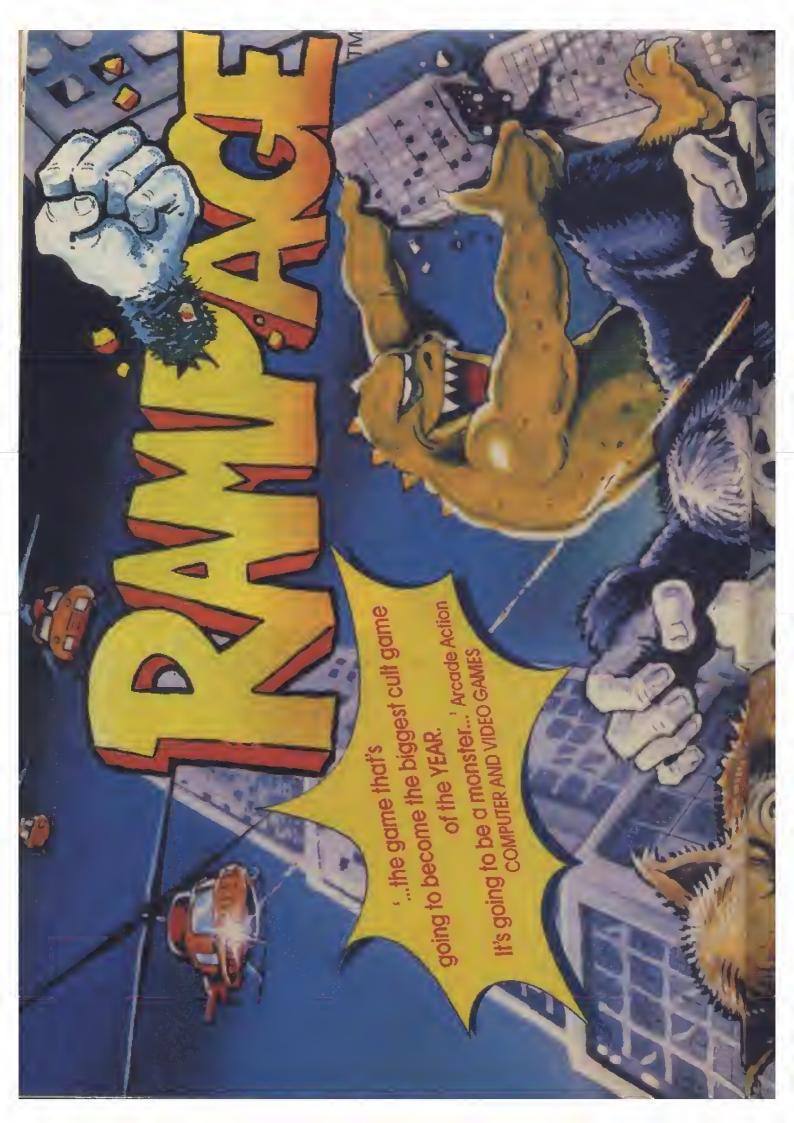
7 What is a bob skate?

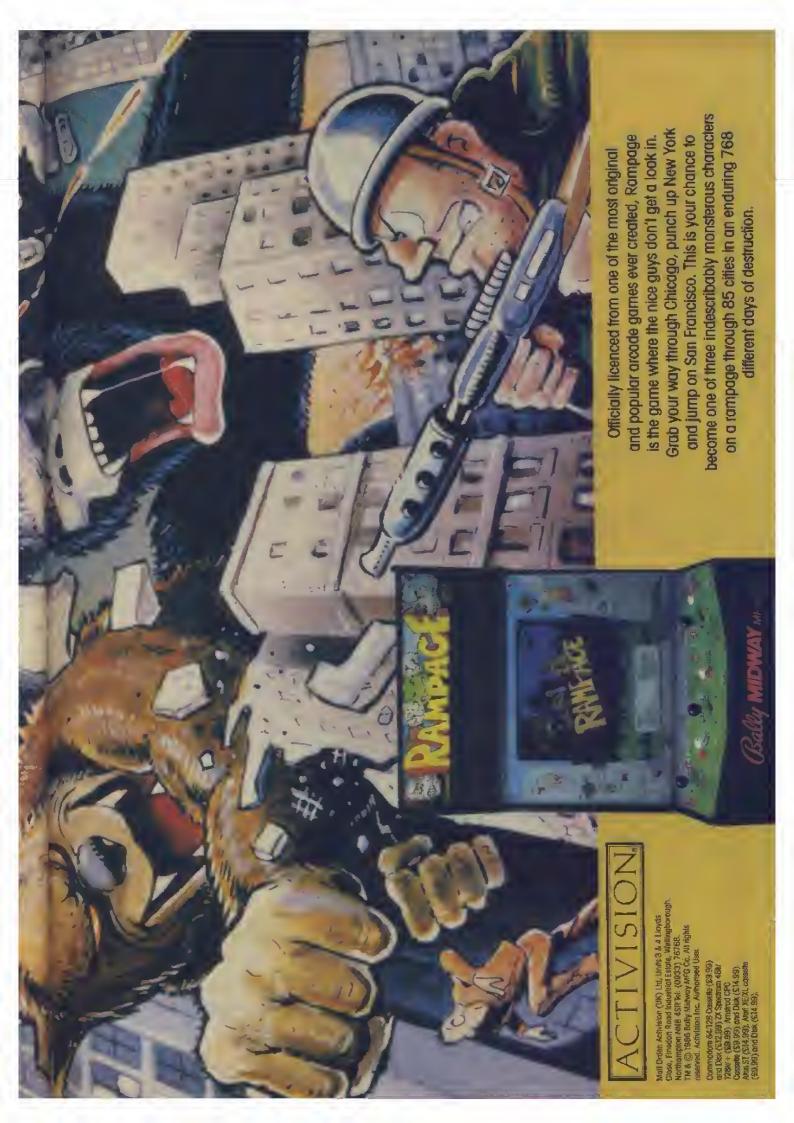
- a) an antiskid technique in bobsleighing
- b) a kind of fish
- c) a kind of skate
- 8 Where would you find a bobstay?

- a) on a boat
- b) on a corset
- c) on a bobsleigh

NAME ADDRESS

POSTCODE









And the last of '87 - we analyse what's coming soon, what's delayed and what's just an idea

HEWSON looks set for a violent year with game names like Marauder (each), Overlidil (zapppp), Thunderforce (thwaccock) and Blitzkiaig (slo). And coming in Lanuary there's the compilation Four Smash

But probably Hewson's Spectrum begiewill be **Cybernold**, a shoot 'em-spirom Explanauthor Raffaele Cecco. Promised for February, it features a weapon packed ship plus plenty of

waspun packed ship plus prenty of items escapes.

Marander's another straightforward shoot 'em up — 'inevitably', says the software house's boss Andrew Hewson, reflecting on his vicious line to – but Hewson also plans a fusion of shoot 'em-up and road-racer in.

well, a game with no name yet

Ariotasoft is adding to the plethora
of latels with Magichyten – and an
impressive launch kne-up. First off is Clever & Smart, a stapstick computer convedy packed with clues and problems, but things get darker after

Magicbytes's **Paranola** (due for february release) is compared to Seorge Orivell's novel 1984. The world is controlled by a tyrannical, omniscient computer, and only by pretending to conformean you carry out your escape

And the areade/strategy scare-'emup Vampire's Empire takes you into the death imbued depths of Dracula's castle to destroy the vampire with light. Garlic, mirrors and clichés also figure prominently.

Mind you, Anolasoft's always adding to the plethora of labels – just a few morths ago **Reaktor** appeared with a listful of releases and then disappeared. Now **Reaktor**'s melting

down with excitement over **Out Of This World**, 15 levels of alien-blasting. **Mirrorsoft** s keeping its feet on the mirrorson's keeping as seet on the ground and gets off to an old-fashioned start with Andy Capp, the official licensed version of the long-running comic strip (as seen in The Daily Mirror, a corporate relative of Mirrorsoft . .). All the Northern numbers of

superskiver Andy's comic page

character appear in the arcade adventure - from chancing your last guid at the bookie's to scrounging from long suffering Flo. Andy Capp is out mild December on Spectrum cassette and +3 disk, and there's a competition in the December 28 Daily Mirror to win

In the December 28 Daily nurror to win the original packaging artwork drawn by the character's creator Reg Smythe. From Ormskirk to Omsk... in January comes the infuriatingly difficult puzzle test of nerves and coordination **Tetris**, programmed in the Soviet

Denton Designs (Frankie Goes To Hollywood, The Great Escape) go to Mirrorsoft for Fox Fights Back. So fai just an idea, it's the first fox hunting game we've heard of but guaranteed to stir the violence-in games lobby. And then there's **Dark Castle** by the

American design company 360, which Mirrorsoft spokesperson Pat Bitton calls 'super whizz-bang' on 16-bit.



So that's already half of Mirrorsoft's release schedule for 1988 - six to eight games, says Bitton, more than this year but we haven't been termbly active this year. We're going to be hyperactive

Konami continues to put its coinops on the Spectrum (at least, those which Ocean doesn't; must be an

which Ocean doesn't; must be an ekonami of scaha) – coming soon are Iron Harse, a fast moving, last-shooting Western game set on a train, and Salamander, hyped by Konamias 'the Nemesis sequel'.

US Gold's big arcade conversion is Out Run, with five courses of Ferran road-racing straight from Sega's famous hydraulic coin-op. Hills and hurrling trucks are added to the usual perits of driving games; Enduro Racer will seem like a Sunday afternoon in the country after this. country after this.

Gauntlet II, sequel to the top-selling Issue 37 Smash, adds new creatures. dangers, magic powers and bifter battles to the much-cloned original in over 100 tevels of mazes. World Class

US Gold's Out Rum giving Enduro Racer a run for your money?

Clever & Smart: comedy launches Arlotasoft's Magicbytes label

Les derboard is an update, too - of the

Lesderboard is an update, too – of the more sedate goffing sim Lesderboard released earlier this year.

But US Gold's champion sports package is California Games, on the Epyx label – six simulations from the coolest state including frisbeethrowing, roller sketing, BMX bike racing, foot bagging (keeping a bean bag up in the air without using arms – sounds silly when you spell it out). Sleateboarding and of course surfing.

sounds sally when you spell it out, skateboarding and of course surfing. And from the US Gold-owned label "GO! there's Bravestam, set a little to the east and a lot into the future – a Wild West-style superhero's bizarre crusade through the planet of New Texas, Also from GO! comes Capcom coin-

op conversion Sidearms, an orgy of waggling, shooting and vivid graphics, as well as **Wizerd Warz**, a fantasy role as werras Wizero Warz, a tainday toe-playing game going heavy on the graphics as well as complex spells and character traits, You're running for Chief Wizard — and in Wizard Warz campaigning means magically sending all other contenders to the back





benches. GOI's Captain America in The Doom Tube Of Dr Megalomann, 2 licence of the Marvel Connec character. s, it's time to save the world again. riding the eponymous superhero's sky cycle and battling through the self-epicentred Dr Megalomann's underground neadquarters to find a

nuclear missite.
What of the Activision stable? Well, from **Electric Dreams** there's a strong opponent for US Gold's Out Run in Super Hang-On, a Sega coin-op conversion with 18 levels and four

We're not supposed to call **System**3's **IK** + a sequel – but it's an enlarged version of the two-year-old international Karate, adding a third fighter and new kicks.

It's back to true sportsmanship for programmer Kevin Toms's classic

team-management simulation - Prism

promises Football Manager II - and onto the track for our ex favourite racing star in Nigel Mansell's Grand

Prix from Martech.
It's been held back while Martech negotiated a distribution deal with aspiring American biggie Electronic Arts; EA admits that after early hype prompted by its massive PCW Show prompted by its massive PCW Show presence trings have gone rather slowly, and adding Martech's ten-odd games a year to its catalogue may help persuade small retailers it's worth dealing with the iconoclastic company.

EA's own Spectrum plans as outlined by President Trip Hawkins in a CRASH

interview – everything from Chuck Yeager's Advanced Flight Simulator to Mini-Putt – may have been rash promises, because there's no sign of a single title. Still, the company says

growing pains are over, (Will EA sign yet another label to swell its distribution package, which

also includes CRL and Nexus? No. say. officials - but then they said that before the Martech deal.)

Finally, there's a unusual combat game from Piranha - unusual because not cute and it's not a licence. Gunboat sends you on a high-tech

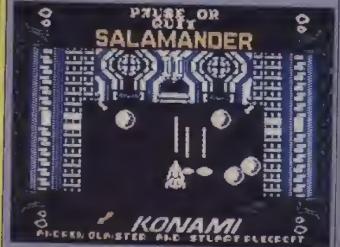
search-and-destroy mission against

enemy submarines.

And, yes, we're still waiting for Piranha to finish Jodge Death—deating with programmers in Budapest is taking longer than expected.



Konami's Salamander, 'the Nemesis sequel'



.

Denizen from Players: space action with Jabba McGut

MORE FROM THE **BUDGET BOOM**

TALK ABOUT walking the plank - whoever thought of calling Software Publishing Associates' new budget label Pirate?

Associates' new budget label **Pirate**?

But it's got a massive line-up including **Apache Raid**, **Collywobbles**, **Vice Versa**, the addictive little **Cosmic Kanga** areade clone **Murphy**, and **Knightfall**.

And that's just the beginning, Later in December come **Dusty Droid & The Garbage Gobblers** (these sound like cutesy titles from 1983...), **Gang Plank** and **Keiler**, and then in January Pirate pushes off **Marine Academy** (for those who flunked **Combat School**), **O.K. Yahi** and **Tenet**.

No sign of anything more on Pirate's full-pnce sister label, **Crysys**, though – the first Crysys game, *Erik Phantom Of The Opera*, is reviewed this issue. Hewson's £2.99 **Rack-It** label promises **Overkill** for early January – it sounds like standard panetrate-the-security complex-and disable-the-weapons stuff – and two more for later in the year. **Thunderforce** throws you in a dungeon a hundred years hence (well, 99 years hence by the time it's released) and pits you against violent, ruthless guards; in **Blitzkreig** you shoot 'em up from a tank and helicopter. Everything on the Rack-It label will be available for the Spectrum, says the eporymous Andrew Hewson, because 'it's much easer to do budget conversions than full-price ones'.

Brace yourself for an onslaught of *Grand Prix* budget titles – hot on the tires of

than tull-price ones.

Brace yourself for an onslaught of *Grand Prix* budget titles — hot on the tires of Code Masters's successful *Grand Prix Simulator* comes *Grand Prix Tennis* from M.A.D., (They know a good racket when they see one.)

Also on the M.A.D. list is *Energy Warrior*, and out on Mastertronic's. multifarious other labels are *Knightshade* (lively!) on Ricochet and a host of

US Gold's Kung Fu Master (18 months old) Is now out on Americana, and Mirrorsoft's Action Reflex (the same age) is on Riccochet alongside Ultimate's three-year old classic Smashes Knight Lore and Alien 8.

three-year-old classic Smashes **Knight Lore** and **Aiten 8**. And from **Players** there is **Denizer**, a space action clické (with a baddie called Jabba McGutt) from the programmers of Riding The Rapids (reviewed on page 168). Players also has a few more £6.95 two-game **Zap Paks** crashing onto the Spectrum +3, Joe Blade and Xanthius are already out on a single disk; a set of *Dizzy Dice* and *Riding The Rapids* is set for December, along with another of *Cybernation* and *Supernova*. The packs also include demos of Players games as yet unplayed.

Dudget reviews: page 165

GREMLIN SPORTS

GREMLIN GRAPHICS is set on sports this Christmas – with a line-up including Tour De Force, Gary Lineker's Superstar Soccer and Alternative World

Tour De Force gives the power to your thighs in a hectic, hazard packed race

Cary Lineker's Superstar Saccer combines management and midfield; you start the game as manager of a washed-out no-hope team (name your favourite) and steer it through nine seasons and four divisions against 63 competitors. Trade players and coach the team — by choosing one of a half-dozen oftensive and detensive strategies — and then control the centre forward during the match. The computer manages your goale, as well as the opposing team if you go for any player made.

the compiter manages your goale, as well as the opposing team it you go for one-player mode.

Superstriker Lineker's connection with the game is a bit tenuous — It's more about management than the nitty-gritty of the field — but hey, it makes a good poster. (And a good board game — Gremlin, diversifying, expects to sell over 150,000 of its first board game, Gary Lineker Footballer Of The Year.)

The first parody of those deadly serious macho sports packages like Ocean's California Garries has arrived — Gremlin's Atternative World Games features sackitacing, boot-throwing, pote-climbing and wall elimbing. Silly graphics and absurd music add to the fun.

But just in case we think Gremlin's all sweetness and light, there's also **Blood Valley.** The smell of blood is in the air," the publicity told us, and we preferred to read no further. Injuries in the second half are about all we can take,

THOSE CRAZY TIE-INS

RAPIDLY running out of obvious licences (though nobody's done a GAC'd Macbeth yet), the software houses turn to the dregs of culture for their tie-ins.

Contrived licence of the year must be **Drolds** from **M.A.D.** – rather vaguely described as an 'exciting phenomenon', it's based on the irritatingly cute robots R2D2 and C3PO from Star Ways.

Superior Software must be leeling silly, too There's a big licence coming from Superior 'before Easter' — All Because, based on the TV ads for Cadbury's Milk ray chocolates!

The ads, which some newborn babies won't have seen, show a superheroic actor going through incredible adventures to reach his lady love and hand her the chocolates—'and all,' the final line says, 'because the tady loves Milk Tray', So in Superior's licence there are five subgames based on the ads: sking,

hang globing, explaining a desert, subaqua diving and motorcycle-leaping across the Grand Caryon. We love it.

More plausibly, from **Activision** comes **Knightmare**, an arcade adventure addled with riddles. It's licensed from the Anglia TV/ITV network role-playing game.

soow which mixes live action and computer-controlled graphics.

Also from Activision, *Predator*—based on the skin-ripping new Arnold Schwarzenegger/20th Century Fox movie which mixes live action with dead action, Game follows film closely, with the player fighting through a Latin American jungle to repel

Tollows film cosely, with the player righting through a Latin American jurgle to repertie eponlymous alien.

Still in the jurgle, Cascade has the incence for Paul Hardcastle's h-h-h-h-hit song.

19. Publicity makes a thin pretence of exploring the angst of an antiwar generation, but there are shose who think it sounds like Combat Schoot.

Still in the jurgle, Piranha has Roy Of The Rovers coming soon — in which connection, incidentally, we have been asked to point out that the Melchester champion is real and not a fictitious character as imputed by John Minson in CRASH. Honest
Finally, a handful of licences someone had to buy.

IS Gold, has accounted official licences to Charles Chaplin, James Daga and

US Gold has acquired official licences to Charlie Chaplin, James Dean and Marilyn Monroe and plans to release *The Seven Year Gold Rush Without A Cause* across all formats. No, seriously, there is a Chaplin make a movie (shoot-'em-up'). game in the works, but Dean and Monroe are probably best left to memory and

And Argus Press Software (see article in this section) is working not only on another Filintstones game (Wilma vs Fred, you play Fred or Barney) but also on the game of a comic which nobody's allowed to identify.

Still, we're sure that as it whizzers through your Spectrum's chips you'll have a dandy beand of a time. Judy, Mandy, Debbie and Buster did with a demo copy; topper the range, they found it, a right little plum, but it'd be pippin those old beezers at Argus if we mentioned the name.

MEN OF DESTINY

DESTINY SOFTWARE is launcified this New Year with two Spectrum title

Ex-Startighter Francis Lee: Jaunching full-price Destiny Software



ARGUS RENAMED IN MASSIVE CHANGE

ARGUS PRESS SOFTWARE has been bought by its Managing Divector Stephen Hall from Argus Press Group, the newspaper-publishing group which launched Argus Press Software and its labels Quicksilva, Bug Byte, Mind Games and

Hall now owns all the software house's share's and will rename it Grand Stam. Entertainment

1988 releases will include Peter Beardsley's Football Game (a playing simulation). The Football Association/England Team Game, and a Graege Hill arcade game following on from Argus's successful licensed version of the TV series earlier this year

Coming even sponer are The Hunt For Red October, based on Torn Clancy's best-selling submarine novel Pac-Land, the return of Pacmarin an Alan/Namou com-op conversion;; and arcade adventure Terramex.

... Pac-Land comp: page 37

ELITE TO LAUNCH BUDGET LABEL

ELFTE's to -aunch a new budget label after Easter, despite the closure of its £2.99 Classics range a year ago. The company says II has about 100 full-price titles ripe.



Code Masters wunderkind Richard Darling (left) and David Darling (right): much-hyped by pictures like this

IS CODE MASTERS GETTING IT RIGHT?

NO SOFTWARE HOUSE is quite as noisily blatant in its self-promotion as Code Masters - yet nothing in the software industry has had as much media coverage

as the image-conscious budget house, now trying to improve its product too.

From Options to the Financial Times, Today to style mag. Dto Media Week, Code
Masters and its Iwo young bosses (20, 21) have been touted as the country's most

wasters and its two young cosses, 2(2), 21) have been touted as the country's most successful, dynamic, go-ahead, just plain tovable software producers.

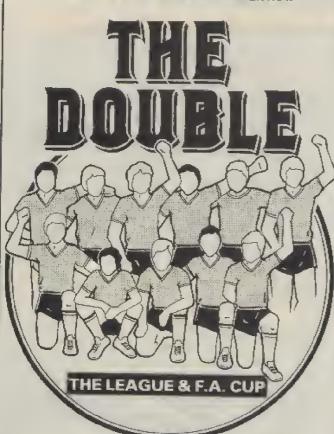
Spectrum-owners have known the truth behind this for some time, and Code Masters has acquired a reputation for £1.99 games worth that at most. They're nice little earners, mind you, nearly all make the top-ten sales charts, and Code Masters claims to be the biggest-selling software house in Britain, having doubted its share of the budget market from 6.3% to 12.8% between August and October.

And now the quality of releases like Professional Ski Simulator and Dizzy (both

high 70s in CRASH) shows Gode Masters is aiming in a new direction – up. The Code Masters Plus range will feature £4.99 games spread over two cassettes. One cassette contains the straightforward game (as available in the £1.99 range) plus a more difficult version; the second cassette has extra levels

First out on the new label is Jet Bike Simulator by the Oliver twins, Philip and Andrew, whose work (including Dizzy, Ski Simulator and the less well-reviewed Grand Prix Simulator) accounts for 20% of the company's sales. It sounds like the new label's name is just right — Jet Bike Simulator is a standard

Gode Masters simulation (overhead-view racing) with 24 extra scenarios on the second tape to account for the 'Plus' tag. The word' simulator' is 'a good addition to a title which helps it sell', says Gode Masters marketing man Bruce Everiss. Leopards and spots and all that ...



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come across."
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LEMIN had one. So did Franco Frey. Don Johnson always looks like he's about to have one, Mike Dunn couldn't if he tried (he's so young!) and no-one knows what Lloyd Mangram sports beneath that paper bag.

Father Christmas has a beard, too – but till you can sort out these impostors, we won't let anyone claiming to be Santa into the Towers to pick up your presents. (OK, yes, we accept this is a transparent fie, but it's perrectly true that you could get some of the latest games free by identifying the man behind the beards.)

Just put the letter of the right photo against each name below. But be careful—there's one beard we haven't named, and you'll have to tell us who that is too. (Hint: not Mike Dunn.)

The first entry picked from the depths of Lloyd's beard—gave it away! — will win the complete CRASH T-shirt range (as advertised on pages 166-167) plus any game reviewed in this issue of CRASH (winner's choice).

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Send your entries and the filled-in form to BEARD AND WONDERFUL COMP, CRASH, PO Box 10, Ludlow, Shropshire SYB 1DB to reach us by February 1 (think of it as an early present for Christmas '88). As usual, the decision of CRASH's appointed judges is final in all respects, so you may have to take it on the chin.

NAME		*****		,	
ADDRE	SS				

POSTCODE

IF I WIN, I'D LIKE THIS GAME FROM ISSUE 48 OF

CRASH

Just write the right letter beside each name . . .

Kevin Toms (Football Manager programmer)
Sir Clive Sinclair (Spectrum inventor)
Graham Stafford (Design – or is he Design?)
Greg Follis (Gargoyle Games)
Alan Sugar (Amstrad boss)
David Crane (Activision founder)

And then there's the mystery man . . What letter is his/her picture?

And who is it?

Scott Adams (Adventure International)



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Gury Denise

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FOR SALE Spectrum 128 plus lots of hardware and software. £200 c.n.o. Write to: MrE Lotman, 17 Rebecca Court, High-view Road, Sidcup, Kent, DA14 4EG.

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FOR SALE SPECTRUM + 48K, Interface, Joystick, Tape Deck, Dust cover, plus two games for £60, Tel; Maldon 783619 ask for Stephen Lincoln.

SPECTRUM 128K +2 for sale, Excellent condition. Plus games, Hardly used. £100, Tel 0895 442659 siter 6pm and ask for Dave

48K SPECTRUM Data Recorder, two port interface, Kempston Joystick and leads, plus over £500 worth of original games in 3 cassette boxes, £200 o.n.o. Phone; 0245 321123 ask for Martin.

BOTTOMS LIP! O.K Now I have your attention, I'm selling a MSX with a remote control robot, plus games. Good condition, worth £300 sell for £125. Phone-Reading 867395 after 6pm, ask for Ste-

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WILL SWAP MY Joyball for a Ouldshot If or Cheetah 125 — Joystick: Joyball is in brilliant nick. Please make sure joystick is In good condition before applying. Phone: 0670 761283 ask for Gordon.

SWAP SNAPSHOT II Interface and soft-ware, very little used, for ZX Interface one or any offers considered. Contact: Connor Sadler, 40 The Oval, North Anston, Shef-field, 531 78Y, ORY

Recorder, new, boxed, Snapshot II, New model 200, Games to swap, Ken Mac-lean, 15 Tom-Na-Faidhir, Claggan, Fort William, PH33 6PU.

INK PRINTER FOR Spectrum 2 vranted, Will swap for cash, hardware or software. Write to: Lee, 7 Longfold, Maghuli, Merseyside, L31 6AF, Tel: 051

HARDWARE WANTED

WANTED DEUS EX MACHINA - for gash or as a swap - and a YTX 5000. Phone; 0734 479468 ask for Tim or leave name and number.

WANTED MULTIFACE ONE must be reasonable also 128K wafers for wated-rive. Write to: Paul Balmer, 23 Percy Gar-dens, Whittey Bay, Tyne & Wear, NE25

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WANTED ROTRONICS WAFADRIVE Microdrive and Interface 1, Will swap for 22 games including Elite, Tomahawk, Ping Pong etc. Ring Bary on 0642 558021 after 5pm except Wed and Thur.

WANTED MULTIFACE ONE or Snapshot Will swap for DK Tronkes Lightpen, Designing Pencil and Friday 13th, must be in good condition. Tel: 0388 818553.

PRINTER AND INTERFACE wanted for 48K Spectrum £25 max, Tel: 0587 20974

WANTED URGENTLY Working Multiface one. Swap for many games, All original. Write to: Dan Warner, 7 Osbarton Road, Summertown, Oxford, OX2 7NU, or Phone: 0865 511775 after 4pm and ask

WANTED COMMODORE 64, plus leads and tape recorder. Send lowest price to: Steve Gallon, 8 Sunnidate, Follside Park, Whickham, Newcastle Upon Tyne, NE16

PROFESSIONAL KEYSOARD WANTED. My girffriend is learning to type so tubber keys are no longer good enough, if you can help contact: Ray Cosson, on 0346 63600 (Good excuse, huh?!)

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PLEASE CAN ANYONE swap The Living Daylights for Leader Board, For more Paul

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DO YOU LIVE IN Barnsiey? Are you fed up with your old games? Then swap them for my games. Write to: Robert Sorfleet, 166 Hudderstield Road, Flat 3, Barnsley,

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WANTED: all your fancy loading routines. Will swap the latest software including: Starglide, Exolon, Batty Barbarian, Wizball and much more. Also wanted Multiface 128. Tel: 0563 43190 ask for Scott.

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MANY GOOD GAMES to swap including Fixedon, Trep Door and Gauntlet. Your list for mine. All lotters answered. Write to: Jonathan Livingstone, 15 Duart Drive. Newton Mearns, Glasgow, G77 50S.

WANTED AMX Mouse, Artist if and Animator 1, Will swap for Endure Racer, Batman, Uridium, The Sentinel and many others. All originals. Tel. 0582 507698 ask for David.

WANTED Chaos, D-Day and Battle Cars by Games Workshop. Swap for Druid, Thantes, Popaye, Thrust, I Ball, Rats or other. Tel: 0222 882582 and ask for Brad, after 6pm. Or write: Brad Owen, 262 Bedwsas Road, Ceerphilly, CFB 3AW.

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WANTED any lips on SpecDrum programming, including writing scratch samples. Also any information on MiDI would be gratefully received, cheers! Paul Codley, 3 Maxwell Radd, Littlehampton, West Sussex, BN17 7BW.

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WANTED hints, tips, POKEs and fanzines. In fact any help at all, Please please can anyone help me with Holy Grail and Sabateur, Vince Butler, 12 Park Road, Earl Stulton, Leics

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If your ad isn't featured this month, don't despair! We'll do our best to get it in ASAP one (as they say in classifieds), and if the worst comes to the worst (which it hasn't for two months now, but we're still waiting) you can always send the ad in again. Don't forget to fill out the whole form, give unflinching obedience to the small print below, and USE BLOCK CAP-ITALS! (Otherwise the worst could come to the worst.)

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GAME SET AND

WE WERE swamped with entries for Ocean's hot and sweaty Issue 46 competition - despite the cockup on the wordsquare! As we speak (well, write) Paul Phillips will be looking forward to the first prize of a video recorder, the video game Winter Olympics and the Spectrum compilation Game Set And Match, which Ocean will be whisking down to Bristol BS13 soon. The four lucky winners of second prizes will each be receiving copies of Winter Clympics and Game Set And Match. They are; lain Waring, Dyfed, Wales SA19 8RA; Paul Hampson, Luton, Bedfordshire LU4 9AH; Jon Lee, Addlestone, Surrey KT15 2TQ; and Lee Ritchie, Bonnybridge, Stirlingshire FK4 1JN.

And another five clever runnersup will each receive Game Set And Match. They just happen to be: Ronny Meikle, Glasgow, Ayr-shire, Scotland KA4 8JN; Andrew J Sylvester, Dudley, West Mid-lands DY1 2QX; Richard Mac-Donald, Scotstoun; Glasgow G14 9DZ; Gary Sidwell, Market Weighton, York YO4 3DH; and Howard Alexander, Faversham, Kent ME13 8KW,

STOMP, STOMP

A RAMPANT gorilla rampaged through November's CRASH, not only breaking out to the cover but also starring in an Activision comp heralding the imminent Rampage coin-op licence.

There's no monkeying around with competition entries but when it comes to prizes, how could we resist? The winner of a fabulous complete gorilla suit is Steven Fitzpatrick from Slough, Berks SL3 8UD. Second prize goes to Jake Johnson of Lydgate, Old-ham, who receives a gorilla head, hands and feet (not real, we hope). Brain Lawson of Fife, Scotland KY12 9HJ gets a gorilla head and hands (not the same two-header). hands (not the same two-headed gorilla, presumably . . .). Fourth prize of a gorilla head goes to Lli-fon Edwards of Llangefni,

Gwynedd LL77 7\$J (perhaps we'll just ring the zoo . . .). And fifth out of the cage was J Norton from Ashington, West Sussex, who gets a rubber (whew!) gonila mask, Like the following 25 runners-up, all the above receive a copy of Activision's Rampage and a triffic poster

above receive a copy of Activision's Hampage and a triffic poster of the game.

Gary Inghem, Gorton, Manchester M18 8NJ: 5 Jevons, Wombourne, Starts WVS 3JZ: Mark Adsett, Brighton, Sumerx BN1 8FD; Paul Toogoed, Shetton Lock, Derby DE2 9EW; Stephen Palling, Prestan, Lancashire PR1 5GP; Tracy Thomson, Abergale, N.Walse LL2; David Fowler, Aberdeen, Scotland AB2 OLD; Stophen Bradburn, Swinton, Manchester M27 1LL; John Barker, Safford, Lanca M53DQ; Shane Hasson, County Derry, N Iroland BT47 4TR; M7-Aktar, Stourbridge, W.Mide DT9 9BG; Stephen Ceivert, Washington, Tyne & Wear NE37 1HR; Co8in Masters, County Durham 5R7 79W; Jojo Cicero, Cardiff, Walsa CF3 OAQ; Joneston Ridetaigh, Markield, Lefe DSS; Bon Bennett, Getsecre, Liverpool L25 20D; John McFadyen, Norbury, London SW18 4QE; Matthew Alexander, Streyber, Phythian, St. Rielers, Merseyside WA10 8A2; David Baines, Nr.Romsley, South Yorkshire ST; 786; P. Bleckford, Wimbseldon, London SW19 4AA; Jeson McGrath, Swindon, Wills SN3 2RJ.

OH, WHAT AN **EXOLONT COMP**

And oh, what exolont prizes as stumped up by Hewson for this Issue 43 caption comp. The winner was M Williams of Kent TN103EP who came up with the caption OK. OK. you've sussed me out the Milky Bars are on me. It may have displeased Mike D for a while but it had me tittering into my sticky bun for hours, if not minutes. M wins a VIP day out at The PCW Show, a water zapper and a copy of Exolon.

The three runners-up, who each receive a water zapper and a copy of Exclon, are Joe Hole of London SE10 8SX, Lee Sharrock of Liverpool L32 8US and Paul Tinker of Nottinghamshire S81

ONR. 20 runners-up each receive a copy of Excion and they are ...

Mr S D Crane, Leicester; Simon Lee, Derbys DE7 5GF; Owen Galt, Nottinghem NG4 4FL; D Blackett, Co Durham; Daniel Goulds, Nortols NB26 U.N; Mark, Sammors, Wandeworth SW18 4AT; Martin Spraggelt; Coventry CV2 FRQ; David Narin, Lancs LA4 4ED; Joe Williams, Glos; Mr B Eabb, Bucks HP15 6DS; Neil Taylor, Devon TQ1 4PF; Stephen Stückings, Lancs LA2 2QW; John Mesvy, Berlast B16 0HQ; 'A Non E Mouse', Seriast B15; David N Koodf, Leicesterinie WS15 1BU; David N Koodf, Leicesterinie LE19 6NB; Devan Stephend Avon BS166/D; Robert Sheldon, West Middande 872 1HY; Charles Allan, Derby DE3 22E; and Astrian Maloney, nr Wigen WN6 BEN

A cautionary tale: an entrant with the caption 'Okay, it was me. I stole the buttered scone!' would have been one of the runners-... but he/she forgot to give a name and address!



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Issues 43, 44, 45, 46, 47 and 49 of CRASH, and most are available, but CRASH cannot guarantee that they are ready yet. If in doubt give Aggie (siles Carol Kinsey) arring on (0584) 5620 to find out whether the delay will be longer than 25 days.

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GOGGLE!

INSTEAD OF THE **QUEEN'S SPEECH**

HAD A LOOK at the Christmas schedule for films on TVP Pretty dire. Only a video can fill those hours after Christmas dinner

There's always a wide range of videos around atin Clustmas ranging from videos like RCAV Columbia's Babes in Toyland for the younger members of the family to grussome horrors like Medesa's The Gate, on general release at the

cnema and now also on video.

Avideo for all tastes is **Short Circuit**, available on the CBS/Fox label from December 3. The talented director John Badham and screen cutey Ally Sheedy, who exercises to worked together in the computer thriller War Games, join Steve Guttenberg (Police Academy, Corcordio this latest robotic runawayfilm, No 5 Is alive – but will Sheedy and Guttenberg common the military before they blow the pile of microchips to the big circuit board in the sky?

Medusa Home Video's December 3 release Willy Milly is a strange old affair. Just imagine how the fun-loving teenager Milly feets when she is endowed with an extra appendage making her a bit more like the boys. With just a 15 certificate it should be a hisarious comp for all the lamily, boys and girls alike

if you like something a bit lastier than a turkey leg to get your leath into at Christmas then be sure to get Avatar's December 4 release Specters. Little do the small team of archaeologists, led by Donald Pleasence (Halloween, realise what terrible evil they are about to unleash upon themselves when they go on an investigative four of the darkest reaches of the Egyptian catacombs.

After all that Christmas pudding and those killer runce pies don't you think you pould do with a fattle exercise? Hi-Pressure Video, distributed by RCA/Columbia think you do. But all that running around is a bit pointless, so why not stretch that right arm and push **Shape Up** in the video recorder? It's the story of the hot and sweaty day-to-day workings of Roger's Gym. Also to be released on December 18 from History

Pressure is Het Spiash, another film about what happens when a load of teenagers get together for some wild beach parties and competition

Avid viewers of the April TV miniseries Escape From Sobibor will be pleased to hear that Sony Video has gained the video rights to the high acclaimed film about the Nazis' treatment of the Jews – and are set to release it on December 14. Just to convince you of its value, Sony has promised that there will be no more TV

screenings for at least a year after that.
After only a few months in the cinemas the highly praised (in the UK anyway) Who's That Girl, starring that typical girl-off the street Madonna, comes out on video just in time for Christmas – December 18 release. Yet again she gets into heaps of trouble, this time with costar Griffin Dunne (After Hours) whom she drags all overtows, and ends up in big trub with two local gangsters. It really is a hilanous black comedy,

Piatom: out of the jungle and onto the small screens



The summer cinema hit of this year was undoubtedly **Lethal Weapon** And just when you thought the likes of Mel Gibson (Mad Max I, II, III) had returned to Australia and Danny Glover (The Color Purple) had gone back to his roots Warner Home Video announces the January 8 release of this American cop movie

Gibson plays a cop on the edge and Glover is his newly-found partner just waiting for retirement, But now both of them have got involved in the investigation of their careers, it's fast and furious action just waiting to burst on the

CIC Video's January 15 release Gung Ho is about the changing face of American industry and the stampeding influence of Japanese technology, As Hunt Stevenson, Michael Keaton (Touch And Go, Mr Morn, Johnny Dangerously), saves the local car factory by persuading Assan

Motors to set up business there. Little do the locals realise that the foreigners bring tradition as well as money with them. Stevenson must keep the locals and the

employers happy.

Just as the Vietnam films are dying out in the cinema the biggest of them all, Platean, comes out of the jurgle into you! Ifving room on January 29. Platon gained four Oscars in the 1987 Academy Awards and looks set to become the biggest release of January. The film tells the story of the Vietnam war through the eyes of new recruit Chris Taylor (Charlie Sheen - *The Wrath*, Lucas). Through his eyes you see the suffering the madness, the terror and the pointlessness of the war which dragged on so long. On simultaneous release is *Platoon* – the computer game by Ocean. More news about that in next

EXTREME PREJUDICE

Guild Home Video PG

SIX EX-SOLDIERS, all listed as killed in action, led by a hard-nosed US Army Major

SIX EX-SOLDIERS, all listed as killed in action, led by a hard-nosed US Army Major called Hackett (Michael Ironside – *Top Gun, Scanners*) are sent on that favourite of American devices, a covert mission. But the territory they infiltrate is small-town Texas where they aim to rob the bank using the very latest in covert technology. Though money is stolen, the real reason behind the robbery is Cash Balley's deposit box and some top-secret government papers inside it. Cash (Powers Boothe – *The Emerald Forest*), who smuggles drugs across the Texas/Mexico border and is a king in his own hideaway bandit-town, is in conflict with his best friend Jack Benteen (Nick Nolte: – *48 Hours, Down And Out In Beverly Hills*), a modern day Texas Ranger, not only because Benteen's boss gets killed in a drugs bust but also because Benteen's girffriend was once Cash's lover.

When Hackett and his team bungle the bank robbery. Benteen finds himself

When Hackett and his team bungle the bank robbery. Benteen finds himself standing a man alone fighting for common decency against the powers of organised crime and legally sanctioned murder.

Nolte, weathered to aged granite, is in fine form as Ranger Benteen, a man out of his depth, but a survivor to the last, in a film currously spaghetti-Western in feel. Extreme Prejudice walks a tightrope between believability and hudicrousness but maintains its tension before threatening to overbalance in the Peckinpah-style slow-motion blood-letting at its conclusion. The violence forms a background to a story drenched in cynicism, rather than being about cynical people. A taut, but tasteless and flawed, thriller.

ROGER KEAN

Extreme Prejudice starts off as a credible action packed thriller, but sadly halfway through it starts to turn into some kind of blood-drenched A-Team clone, Extreme Prejudice may not hold together as strong as some other so-called 'tough movies but the action is intense and the story easy to follow even at such a pace, I was expecting a violent movie - coming from the producers of First Blood and Rambo

AMERICAN ANTHEM

Guild Home Video PG

DIRECTOR ALBERT MAGNOLI (Purple Rain) tries to ride on the popularity of sport dramas in this amazingly thin plot about a young man caught in 'a conflict of desire and responsibility'. The sport is gymnastics – photogenic indeed, you might think, but thrown away by Magnoll's lackiustre cinematography – at which he wants to be the best, the responsibility is for his shredded family.

American Anthemstars the 1984 Olympic gold medallist Mitch Gaylord as Steve Tevere; his prowess on the horizontal bars is undoubted, but his limited acting skills

require a director who cares about actors rather than designing dull pop promo

scenes to self the insipid, though insistently heavy, soundtrack.

America may be great, but it shouldn't stoop to foist such blatantly fascist, soft-porn athletics (does the director know anything about the sport?) on an audience well able to distinguish between dramatically realised people and plastic promo androids. Fine if you're into like-heavy-man-sounds and meaningless heroics, insulting if you even vaguely think.

OLIVER FREY

American Anthem is very strangely constructed it starts off involved and interesting with no-one taking an obvious starring role, But as soon as the director pushes Mitch Gaylord to the fore it gets wishy-washy and boring. The soundtrack is the saving grace which made me watch to the end – which is, incidentally, terrible and up in the air. DOMINIC HANDY 50%

THREE AMIGOS!

RCA/Columbia

MEET.. The Three Amigos, brave, dashing stars of Hollywood's silver screen. The year is 1916, and having seen their fearless shows at the movies, the beautiful but throubled Carmen begs the thro to help her Mexican village, under threat from the evil El Guapo, bandit chief and an all-round nasty person.

The eponymous three are Lucky Day (Steve Martin – Roxanne, The Jerk, The Man with Two Brains), Dusty Bottoms (Chevy Chase – Fletch, National Lampagon's Summer Vacadion), and Ned Nederlander (Martin Short – Innerspace). However, they believe the whole business Is only for a flim; they assume automatically that the reward money offered is their pay, and presume the town admires them because everyone's sean their films. Thus the cornic situation is set up.

Everything goes well, for the first few hours. At Carmen's bidding, the trio mount their horses and confront El Guapo's bandits who have ridden into town. Unaware of the reality of the situation, the three actors let fly with a flurry of insults, much to the surplise of the baddies, who have never come up against any resistance from the townspeople.

El Guapo returns with a band of 50 men the next day, and it is only when Lucky is grazed by one of the bandd's bullets that the three amigos realise it's all for

Bring together two superb comedians, Steve Martin and Chevy Chase, throw in an unknown quantity – Martin Short – for good measure and give them a slow and badly-written script. Martin and Chase try their best to make the most of a lackwise and unfunny dialogue and develop characters that were never meant to be anything but shallow. Three Amigost is about half an hour too long, and successful visual gags are few and far between. The film had plenty of potential, but I found myself watching in glaeful anticipation of laughs that never came...

36%

STEVE AND GARF ND KNOBBO AND BOB AND FINGERS

It all happened at once when PAUL EVANS took pad, pen and VTX to Micronet's Turbo chatline

CHATLINES are simply a way of talking to other Micronet-users. Most Involve a frame containing a message sent by a user which is changed when another user sends a message; any number of 'netters can see the message, you've missed it for good!

There are many specialist chattines (a gay one was launched, for example); to see the entire list look on Micronet page *811#. I find Turbo the best, it was launched around 16 months ago and took a new approach.

Four boxes appear on the screen, and each person chatters or gossips in turn. So if you miss anything while sending in a message, you can look back through the archives. While I chatted on *Turbo*, 12 people logged in and talked away. There are some great characters on the line who'll have you reeling with laughter, and there's just one guiding principle: everyone is there to enjoy themselves and any swearing or abuse is out. You do, of course, get the odd idiot who gets cocky, and is promptly put It's common to have a nickness cocky and is promptly put.

It's common to have a nickname on the chatlines – and just as common to get into a chaotic conversation with half a dozen 'netters at once . . .

Hi there! Anyone lancy a chat?

Steve: Hi, Paul!

Hi, Steve! How are you?

Steve: I'm fine, thanks. Just watching a film, It's not bad,

Garfield: Hil I'll have a chat!

Hi, Garfield! Do you use chatlines often?

Garfield: Yes! Every day!

Why do you use Turbo in preference to Talkabout, which is easier to use?

Garfield: I don't know. This is more popular and the people are more real. Also, I meet a number of friends here.

Are you a regular, Steve?

Steve: Yes, I am.

Your thoughts on Talkabout?

Steve: I use Turbo because it's cheaper than Talkabout and I can listen to music or watch TV as well!

Also, you don't get interviewed on Turbo! Any chance you can mention my terrapin-washing agency in the write-up? It's doing very well at the moment.

Hmmmm. How many people use chatlines and what are they like? Steve: Well, I mailbox four or five people all the time, but I see about 30 or so regulars on the various lines. There are also a lot of people who nip in now and again for a chat.

Garfield: I usually set weekends for meets with about 5-10 people and go on each evening for a chat with anyone!

Steve: Garf does a good Tim impression and catches me all the

So which do you think is the best chatline?

Steve: Turbo is the best by far, it's very quick, you get the point of

the conversation over and can't waffle, and you can look at four messages at once.

Garfield: Lalso, like Steve, MBX a number of people each time I'm on. I like *Turbo*. You can see the messages after you come back from a five-minute wander!! I usually miss Quickchat messages. By this time my store is filling with the messages, so I break off to save my findings to tape, Just as I go . . .

Knobbo: Hi, Paull Haven't seen you for a while.

(What happens next is impossible, because the chatters live on opposite sides of the country – it shows what a bunch of loonles Micronetters are! Bob now appears . . .)

Steve: Hi, Bob!

Garf; I'm back! Is Paul? Here's a Hob Nob, Tracey!

Steve: And one for me, Garf ole pall

Hil I'm backi Hi, Knobbo, how long have you been using

Turbo for now?

Knobbo: As long as it's been here!

How long's that, then? Knobbo: About 16 months!

Fingers: Evening all!

Steve: Garff You broke my Hob Nobl How come I always get the one off the top of the packet?

Garf: Sorry, Steve. Hi, Fingers! How's Maddy?

Hi, Fingers! Anyone have any complaints about Turbo or the fact that I don't have a Hob Nob? Could we possibly get back to the subject?

Fingers: Hi, all! This looks like fun!

Garfield: Well, it breaks about once a week.

Bob: Come on, Garf, It's more like twice a day!

Garfield: Sometimes it's slow putting up messages (10 minutes, compared with 30 seconds normally) but that's all, really.

Bob: Complaints? Lots!

Steve: Sometimes you get some wallies on here who insist on putting up foul language. This is a family show! There is a ten-year-old and a six-year-old using my account and I have to go on other chatlines when they're on.

Garfield: On swearing, my mum (Joan Collins) has been on here and came straight off because someone swore at her.

Tracey: Complaints? Yeah, idiots who continually pester girls. Let's hope Micronet gets on the case. Fingers, how do you like

Fingers: How close are you to the POKEs editor of CRASH?

Are you referring to LLoyd or Nick?

Fingers: Yup, Lloyd, that's the one.

Never met him. He gets a lot of mail, though!

Fingers: Well, tell him to get the Head Over Heels POKE right!

Steve: My mate thinks the same as Tracey.

Finally, how long do you chat for and does the phone cost deter

Steve: I've been on all day!

Garfield: I've just found out Micronet charged the number and the phone charge was 9p for four minutes and I'm on four to six hours

Steve: How much???

At that point all hell broke loose and the interview came to an end! Everyone's very sociable on the chatlines, and it's a good way to let off steam. The chatting on *Turbo* starts about 6pm and goes on way into the early hours. And those who've been to parties are even merrier. So if you find a modem in your stocking this Christmas, just log on to Prestel and key *TURBO# or *11411. You'll be glued for hours.



